

PRACTICAL  
DISCOURSES  
ON THE  
Lord's Prayer:

WHERE THE  
DESIGN, MATTER, and FORM  
of it is explain'd,

IN A  
*Plain Familiar Manner,*

And fitted to the

MEANEST CAPACITIES.

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By *OFFSPRING BLACKALL* D.D.  
Late Lord Bishop of *Exeter.*

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*Necessary to be read in Families.*

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*L O N D O N:*

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against the North Door of *St. Paul's.*  
M. DCC. XXVII.

PRAGTICIAN  
DISCOURSES

ON THE

PRINCIPLES  
OF POLITICAL

LIBERTY

AT THE END OF FORM  
OF GOVERNMENT



MR ERNST GABRIEL

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THE



THE  
DESIGN,  
*Matter, and Form*  
OF THE  
LORD'S PRAYER.



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## DISCOURSE I.

The Design, Matter and Form,  
of the Lord's Prayer.



MATTH. vi. 9.

*After this Manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.*



UR Lord having in the foregoing Verses caution'd us against seeking Glory to ourselves in our Addresses to God, and against ekeing out our Prayers to God

B 4

with

with vain Repetitions and much Speaking, as if we thought either that God was pleas'd with a Multitude of Words, or that he did not, nor could, understand our Needs, unless we were very copious and particular in declaring them; continues his Discourse concerning Prayer still farther in the Text and following Verses, by prescribing a Form of Words very proper to be used as a Prayer to God; and to which also, as to a Pattern, we ought to have Regard in all the other Prayers which we make to him. And this is what we commonly call *The Lord's Prayer. Our Father which art in Heaven; hallowed be thy Name, &c.*

But before I come to treat of the Prayer itself, I think it may be proper to premise some Things.

Here therefore I shall discourse somewhat,

I. Concerning the *Occasion* of our Lord's dictating this Prayer to his Disciples.

II. Con-

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- II. Concerning the general *Design of it*.
- III. Concerning the *Matter of it*. And,
- IV. Concerning the *Frame and Composure of it*.

I. Concerning the *Occasion* of our Lord's dictating and prescribing this Prayer to his Disciples.

And here we may observe, that this very same Prayer, with only some small Variation, is recorded by two of the *Evangelists*, St. *Matthew* and St. *Luke*; by St. *Matthew* here, and by St. *Luke* in the xi<sup>th</sup> Chapter of his Gospel, at the 2<sup>d</sup> and following Verses. And, according to the Account which these *Evangelists* give of it, it seems to have been dictated by our Lord upon two very different Occasions.

For here, in St. *Matthew*, this Prayer is brought in as a Part of that one continued Discourse of our Lord, called his *Sermon upon the Mount*, which takes up three whole Chapters, and seems to be deliver'd at once, without any Break or Interruption; and in which our *Saviour* has compriz'd the whole Sum and Sub-

stance

stance of the practical Part of the Christian Religion. And what seems here to have given Occasion to his prescribing this Form or Pattern of Prayer, was the Cau-  
tion which he had just before given his Disciples to avoid that affected Prolixity in Prayer, which the *Heathens* were remarkable for, who seem to have *thought that they should be heard for their much speaking*. The Vanity whereof, when he had shewed at the 8<sup>th</sup> Verse, by the Con-  
sideration of the Goodness and Knowledge of God; *your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him*; he then, as a farther Provision and Secu-  
rity against that Fault, dictates to them this short, but comprehensive Prayer, as a Pattern, according to which, if they were but always careful to form their own Prayers, they would be sure not to fall into it. For this Connexion of these Words with the foregoing is imply'd in the Word *therefore*: *be not ye like unto the Heathens*, who use *vain Repetitions* in their Prayers, and *think they shall be heard for their much speaking*: For *your Father*.

ther knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him. After this Manner therefore pray ye; Our Father which art in Heaven, &c. i. e. be your Prayers short, full and concise, as this is.

But in the xi<sup>th</sup> Chapter of St. *Luke*, where we meet again with this Prayer, it is not brought in as a Part of the *Sermon upon the Mount*; (for that, if it be any where at all recorded by St. *Luke*, is in the vi<sup>th</sup> Chapter of his Gospel; where, indeed, we meet with many Passages, agreeing not only in Sense, but in Words and Expressions too, with several Passages in this Sermon; but neither is there any Mention made there of this Prayer) nor is it any where else recorded by St. *Luke* as a Part of any other set and continued Discourse of our *Saviour*. But the Occasion of our Lord's then dictating this Prayer to his Disciples, is at the 1<sup>st</sup> Verse of that xi<sup>th</sup> Chapter of St. *Luke*, expressly noted to have been this: *It came to pass, that as he was praying in a certain Place, when he ceased, one of his Disciples said unto him; Lord teach us to pray; as John*

*John also taught his Disciples.* And then it follows, v. 2. *And he said unto them; when ye pray, say, Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.*

Here then are two clearly different Occasions, noted by these two *Evangelists*, of our Lord's dictating this Prayer. Once he did it of his own Motion; and the other time he did it at the Request of one of his Disciples: once he did it as he was Preaching, and, as it seems too, in the middle of his Sermon; and the other time he did it as he was praying, I mean, immediately after he had finished his own Prayer; one of his Disciples taking Occasion from thence to desire him to teach them also how to pray. And lastly, once he did it at the Beginning of his Ministry; for 'tis here recorded by St. *Matthew*, as a Part of the first Sermon that he made after he had called to himself some Disciples: and the other time he seems to have done it in the middle of his Ministry; (probably in the second, or perhaps in the third, Year of his Preaching) for there are many things recorded

corded by St. Luke, as spoken and done by him before this.

So that however we can't be certain of the exact time, or times, when our Lord did dictate this Prayer, (because the Order of Time is not always nicely observ'd by the *Evangelists*; for many times what one relates as done before, another relates as done afterwards;) yet thus much, at least, seems very clear from what has been already said; that this very same Prayer (at least so far as 'tis the same in both the *Evangelists*,) was dictated by our Lord to his Disciples more than once.

And from hence we may reasonably infer, both the absolute Perfection of this Form of Prayer, and also our strict Obligation both to use the same as a Prayer, and also to compose whatever other Prayers we make according to this Pattern.

And this leads me to the next thing which I propounded to discourse somewhat of, *viz.*

II. The general *Design* of our Lord's teaching his Disciples this Prayer. And that seems to be twofold.

1. He seems to have design'd it as a *Pattern* of Prayer, according to which they should compose their own Prayers, so as to avoid needless Prolixity; and so, also, as to present their Requests to God in the most grave, most easy, most familiar, and most devout Expressions. *After this manner pray ye*, says our *Saviour* in the Text: pray *after this manner*; that is, let your Prayers to God be always such as this is; for Substance the same, for Composure like to this which I now dictate to you.

And thus our Lord's Disciples seem at first to have understood him; *viz.* as only giving them a Pattern of Prayer, not as prescribing to them the Use of this particular Form. But that he had a farther Design in it, is evident, *viz.*

2. To

2. To supply them also with a Form of Prayer ready made for their Use. For it was customary, it seems, for the *Doctors* among the *Jews* to compose Prayers for the Use of their Scholars, as well as to instruct them in the Act of praying. St. *John Baptist*, it seems, had done this; which made the Disciple in St. *Luke* to desire of our Lord, that he also would be pleased to compose a Form of Prayer for their Use; *Lord, says he, teach us to pray, as John also taught his Disciples.* In Answer to which, therefore, our Lord there prescribes to them, to use as a Prayer those very Words, which he had, once at least, before dictated to them as a Pattern of Prayer. *When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in Heaven, &c. i.e.* this, which I have formerly set before you as a Pattern, I now prescribe to you as a Form of Prayer, both very proper to be us'd by it self, and likewise to be added by you to your other Prayers, to supply the Defects thereof. Not that I mean hereby to restrain you to

to this Form only, or to forbid you to put up other Prayers to God, as you shall have Occasion, and as your Needs shall require; but what I mean, is, that you should, sometimes at least, put up your Petitions to God in those very Words, which, having formerly dictated to you as a Pattern, I do now again repeat to you as a good Form of Prayer. *When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.*

And what we may very naturally, and very strongly too, infer from hence, is this; that it is *not unlawful* to pray to God by a *set Form*. I might infer more *viz.* that it is *ordinarily best* that we should do so. This, I say, is what might fairly be argu'd from our *Saviour's* so readily answering the Request of his Disciples, by teaching them a Form of Prayer, and not rather giving them some Check for making such a Request. But that it is *not unlawful* to use a Form of Prayer is all that I mean at present to contend for; and *that* most evidently follows from what has been said. For our Lord, who knew

knew best what Petitions were most proper to be put up to God, knew also in what manner they were most proper to be offered up; and if he had known that a set Form of Words in Prayer was not pleasing to God, he would not certainly have prescrib'd any set Form of Prayer to be used by his own Disciples: which yet is what he plainly does in that Place of St. Luke, *when ye pray, say, Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.*

And this alone (if there were nothing else to be said) is abundantly sufficient to justify our Church, in ordering a set Form of Prayer to be used at our publick Worship in the Church; and to shew how unreasonable and unwarrantable the Separation of the Dissenters from the Church is upon this Account. They will not join with us in Prayer, because we use a Form of Prayer; because we pray by a set Form: but would they then have join'd with the Apostles of our Lord himself, in their Prayers, if they had lived in those times? No; they who now separate from us upon this Account only (*i. e.* not for any

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just Exception which they have to make against either the Matter or the Composure of our Prayers, but only because we use a set Form of Prayer: they, I say, who separate from us now only upon this Account,) must also, if they had lived in the primitive Times of Christianity, have separated from the Apostles themselves upon the same Account; for they also used a set Form of Prayer; they prayed by a Form, as we do.

And if it be asked how I prove this? I prove it, I think, very plainly from that Passage in St. Luke before-cited, *Luke xi. 1, 2. One of his Disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his Disciples.* The thing which this Disciple here desired of Christ plainly was, that he would teach them a *Form of Prayer*, for that was what John had done for his Disciples. And this their Desire he immediately comply'd with; he taught them a Prayer, as John had done; *he said, when ye pray, say, Our Father, &c.*

Now, therefore, if the Apostles of our Lord did not afterwards use this Prayer,  
or

or pray in these Words, as he had commanded them, they disobeyed his Command, which I presume our Dissenters will not affirm; (tho', by the way, if indeed they were thus disobedient, that would not serve to justify us in the like Disobedience; *be ye Followers of me*, says St. Paul, even as I also am of Christ. The Example of another, even tho' it be of an Apostle, is no farther to be follow'd than it is agreeable to this Rule. But that the Practice of the Apostles in this Case was not according to our Saviour's Direction, is not to be suppos'd;) and if they did obey this Command of our Saviour, and did sometimes pray in these Words which our Lord had prescribed to them; whenever they did so, they prayed by a Form. And therefore our Dissenters, if they had lived then, must for this Reason have refused to join in Prayer with them; they must then have set up separate Congregations, distinct from those religious Assemblies which were held by the Apostles; they must have said that it was

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necessary to pray to God after a better manner than the Apostles did.

Judge you then, I pray, for your selves; but so judge, as considering that you must hereafter give a strict Account to God the Judge of all; (judge you, I say,) whether that can be a good Ground of separating from the Church, or making a Schism and Division in it, which was, and if you had lived then must have been to you, as good a Ground of forsaking the Fellowship of the holy Apostles, as it is now of withdrawing your selves from the Communion of the establish'd Church.

I know not what new Light our Dissenters pretend to, when they declaim against Forms of Prayer, as dull, and formal, and unacceptable to God; but sure I am, it is not a true Light which directs them to another way than our *Saviour* directed Men to take; for he (as the *Apostle St. John* tells us, *John i. 9.* he) *was the true Light which lighteth every Man that cometh into the World*; and he directed Men, when they prayed, to use this Form of Words, to say, *Our Father*  
*which*

which art in Heaven, &c. Are they then wiser than the Apostles, who used a Form of Prayer? Nay, are they wiser than our Lord himself (the *Wisdom* of God the Father) who prescribed a Form of Prayer to his Disciples? If they are not, then a Form of Prayer is, at least, lawful; and then to separate from the establish'd Church, only because she uses a Form in her publick Worship, is a sinful and schismatical Separation. But if they should say, that in this respect they do understand more than the Apostles did, and that they know better what will please God than our *Saviour* himself did: and indeed some of them (unless they are grievously bely'd,) have not scrupled to speak to this Effect; I mean, to say that this Prayer, tho' dictated by our Lord himself, is yet nothing near so good an one as are the Prayers which they make every Day: and that, tho' it might be of some Use to those for whom it was made, who were then but young Disciples of *Christ*, and, as themselves own'd, wanted to be taught how to pray; yet 'tis not fit to be now

uled as a Prayer by Persons of such exalted Understandings, and so full of the Spirit as they are. I hope the notorious Blasphemy of such Expressions will be a sufficient Caution to you to give no Heed or Credit to them who utter them: for to all such conceited Persons, I'm sure, we may truly apply these Words of the *Apostle, Rom. i. 22.* *Professing themselves to be wise, they became Fools.*

But what is there, after all, that these Men do object against a set Form of Prayer? What Reasons do they give why they may not join in it? Why, 1. They say, that a Form of Prayer can't be suited to *all Occasions.* 2. That the Use of a Form is a *Stinting of the Spirit.* And, 3. That 'tis *contrary* to that praying *by the Spirit* which is most pleasing to God.

I shall therefore now briefly consider the Weight of these Objections against the Use of a set Form of Prayer; tho' indeed I think, that after what has been already said to justify the Use of it from our *Saviour's* prescribing this Form of Prayer to his Disciples, more Words upon this Occasion

casion must be needless. I will not therefore use many.

1. Then, they say that a Form of Prayer can't be suited to all Occasions.

Very true; but what then? Is it therefore unlawful, upon any Occasion, to use a Form of Prayer that is well-suited to that particular Occasion? Mayn't I, for Instance, in a Time of Pestilence, use a Form of Prayer which is well-suited to a Time of Pestilence, because the same Form will not suit so well a Time of Famine? Or because, perhaps, the Church, which provided a proper Form for one of these Occasions, did not do the same for both of them?

Again ; supposing that neither our Liturgy, nor any other Form of Prayer which is already made, is suited to all the Occasions which may be hereafter ; yet what does this prove ? Does this prove in general the Unlawfulness of praying by a Form ? No ; all that it proves is, that that particular Form, being not so perfect as it

might be, is capable of Amendments and Improvements.

Nay, supposing it not possible that any Liturgy should be so contrived by the Wit of Man, as to provide for all Occasions beforehand; yet what hinders, but that when any such new, and before unprovided for, Occasion happens, a new Form of Prayer may be made which may be suited to that? So that, as this does not at all affect the main Question, *viz.* whether it be lawful to pray by a Form; so neither is it any Objection against Liturgies, or Forms of Prayer in general: for there is no Occasion which can ever happen, but what may be suited as well by a Form of Prayer to be made upon that Occasion, as by a Prayer spoken *extempore*; because, whatever may be spoken once, may be spoken a second, or a third time; and whatever may be spoken, may be written down and read; and when it is spoken a second or a third time, or when 'tis written down and read, then they call it a Form. But be it so; yet, if it suited the Occasion the first time it was spoken,

it

it will suit the same Occasion as well when it has been spoken or read an hundred times. So that this Objection against a Form of Prayer in general, is manifestly nothing but a mere Cavil.

But if what they mean by it, is only in particular, that the Prayers of the Church, now contain'd and prescrib'd in the Liturgy, do not actually extend to all the Occasions which we may possibly have. This may be granted without any Inconvenience, the Answer to it being very easy, *viz.*

That so neither can any Prayer that is spoken by any Man *extempore*, extend to all Occasions, and express all the Requests which every Person in the Congregation may have to put up to God. In this Respect, therefore, any Prayer which can be made is plainly as deficient as the publick Prayers of the Church are.

But the Truth is, that the Prayers of the Church are not (nor indeed are any *publick* Prayers) to be thought deficient upon this Account; especially considering, that tho' the Church prescribes a Form to  
be

be ordinarily used in our publick Devotions, (and which is indeed as well suited to all the common Occasions of the Church, and of all the Members of it, as any publick Form can be;) yet she does not thereby abridge her own Power to compose and enjoin occasional Forms of Devotion upon special Emergencies. And again, tho' she enjoins the Use of the Liturgy in the Church, and forbids any other common Prayers; (that being indeed as well suited to all the common Occasions of the Church, and of all the Members of it, as 'tis fit any Office of publick Prayer should be;) yet she does not thereby mean to forbid her Children, when they have, any of them, any particular Sins to confess, any particular Blessings to give Thanks for, or any particular Requests to make known to God; to use any other Prayers of their own, or another's composing, which may be better adapted to such special Occasions than the publick Prayers are, or indeed than a publick Liturgy should be. But then the proper Time and Place for such

such Devotions is, when we are alone and in secret. But,

2. Another thing objected against a set Form of Prayer, is, that 'tis a stinting of the Spirit.

But here it must be noted, that, when we speak of set Forms, we mean only Forms of Prayer for publick Worship; it being before granted, that in our private Devotions every Person is at his Liberty to pray, either by a Form or not, as shall seem to himself most expedient.

How then, I say, is a publick Form of Prayer, to be used in the Church, a stinting of the Spirit? Or *whose* Spirit does it stint? The Spirit of the *Speaker*? Or the Spirit of the *Hearers*? Or the Spirit of *God*?

(1.) Does it stint the Spirit of the *Speaker*? That indeed must be granted. But then, I say, that there is no Harm in this; nay, I say more, there's a great deal of Good in it. For this was indeed the very Design of the Church, in composing and

prescribing a Form of Prayer for the publick Worship, that the Spirit of those who pray in publick, and who are the Mouth of the Congregation to God, might be restrain'd and limited: that is, that in the publick Worship, which ought always to be grave, solemn, and serious, the Speaker might not run out in vain Repetitions, and idle Tautologies; that he might not utter any Expressions which are indecent or extravagant, and more likely to excite Laughter in the Hearers, than to stir up true Devotion; which they who allow themselves the Liberty of praying *extempore*, in the publick Congregation, are very apt to do. So that if this be indeed a stinting of the Spirit, 'tis not however a good and devout Spirit which is thereby stinted; for there is nothing more apt to excite and keep up true Devotion in the Minds of the Congregation, than a Prayer which is wisely composed, and gravely express'd; (and such are the Prayers of the Church; such indeed any study'd and composed Form of Prayer is more likely to be, than a Prayer which is utter'd

utter'd *extempore*, without Thinking or Premeditation.) So that all the Spirit which is stinted, by a good Form of Prayer, is only a Spirit of Folly and Vanity, of Carelessness and Irreverence; nay, perhaps of Faction and Blasphemy: and I'm sure it is not fit there should ever be any such Spirit in our publick Prayers and Devotions. But,

(2.) Is it then the Spirit of the *Hearers*, that is, of those who are to join with the Minister in Prayer, which is stinted by his using of a set Form?

This likewise may be granted; but then, in Answer to it, it may truly be said, that this is nothing more than what is, and must be, whether the Minister uses a Form of Prayer, or whether he prays *extempore*; and whether he prays by a Form prescribed by the Church, or by a Form of his own composing. The Spirit of the Hearers is as much stinted in one of these Cases, as in another; and not more in any one of them than in any other. For in whatsoever manner the Minister

nister prays, by a Form or without, the Business of the People is to join with him in *his Prayer*; they are to mind what *he* says, and their Heart is to go along with *his Words*; they are not, at that time, to have any Thoughts in their Minds, but such as the Words which the Minister utters do suggest to them. And if the Spirit of the Hearers be not thus stinted, *i. e.* if while the Minister speaks one thing, they take the Liberty to think of another thing, they cease to pray in common; and the Liberty which they then take of thinking what they please, is in truth neither better nor worse than wandering in Prayer, and leaving the Business which they ought to be then about. But,

(3.) Lastly; is it then the Spirit of *God* which is stinted by the Use of a set Form of Prayer?

How can that be? For the Spirit of *God* is not given us to teach us what Words to utter in Prayer to *God*; those the Sense of our own Needs and Occasi-

ons do readily enough supply us with ; and there is no more need of an extraordinary Assistance of the Spirit to enable us to express the Thoughts and Desires of our Minds in proper Words, when we put up a Prayer to God, than there is when we put up a Petition to a Man ; or indeed than there is to enable us to express our Thoughts at any other Time, or upon any other Occasion. But the Spirit of God is given us in Prayer, to excite in us pious and devout Affections towards God, and to enable us to accompany those Words, which we utter in Prayer, with hearty and devout Affections. So we are taught by the *Apostle*, Rom. viii. 26. *Like-  
wise the Spirit also helpeth our Infir-  
miti-  
es ; for we know not what to pray for  
as we ought, but the Spirit it self maketh Intercession for us, with Groanings  
which cannot be utter'd.* Here you see how the *Spirit of God helpeth our Infir-  
miti-  
es* ; it is not, at least not ordinarily, by supplying us with Words ; but by exciting in us devout Affections and fervent Desires ; it *maketh Intercession for us, with*

*with Groanings which cannot be utter'd.*  
Or if the Spirit of God be indeed assistant to any at all in the forming of their Prayers, is there not very good Reason to think that it is thus assisting to the Guides and Pastors of the Church, in their composing proper Forms of Prayer for the Use of the Church, as well as, or indeed much rather than, to any single Man who takes upon him to utter a Prayer *extempore*? And if the publick Prayers of the Church are draw'n up by the Help and Assistance of the holy Spirit, (which, I'm sure, there is as much Reason to believe, as that any private Man's Prayers are so suggested to him;) it can be no stinting of the Spirit to pray to God by a Form of Prayer, which was drawn up by wise and good Men, with the Assistance of the holy Spirit. But,

3. It was farther objected against the Use of a set Form of Prayer; that to pray by a Form, is contrary to that praying *by the Spirit*, which is most pleasing to God.

But

But how can that be? when (as I have just now shewn) we may pray *by the Spirit*, as well when we use a Form, as when we pray *extempore*; in Case the publick Form which we make use of was drawn up by the Assistance of the Spirit: which, as I said, there is at least as much Reason to believe, as that any *extempore* Prayer is so drawn up.

But the Truth is, they mistake the Scripture, who think that it is our Duty to pray *by the Spirit*; for this is no where commanded or required. We are commanded indeed to worship God *in Spirit*; and our *Saviour* says, that none else are true Worshippers of God, but such as *worship him in Spirit and in Truth*, John iv. 23, 24. And we are also directed by the Apostles, to *pray in the Spirit*, and to *pray with the Spirit*; but to *pray in the Spirit*, and *with the Spirit*, is a quite different thing from praying *by the Spirit*, as that Phrase is commonly understood. For what is commonly meant by *praying by the Spirit*, is, to have our Prayers, both Matter and Words, dicta-

ted and suggested to us by the holy Spirit of God; 'tis to pray by Inspiration, as the *Prophets* and *Apostles* spake and wrote, *as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*; 'tis to pray, as the holy *Psalman* did, in those *Psalms* which we now read in the Bible, and are granted to have been of divine Inspiration. But thus to pray to God is not laid upon us as a Duty; for it is no where in Scripture required of us, that we should pray by Inspiration: and when any Man tells you that he prays by the Spirit, if what he tells you be indeed true, *i. e.* if the Matter and Words which he utters in Prayer are really suggested to him by the holy Spirit, as he would have you believe; you ought to take every Word which such a Man speaks in his Prayer, not as the Words of a Man, but as the Words of God. You ought therefore carefully to write them down from his Mouth, and to give Copies thereof about to the *Christian Church*. For the Spirit of God is always the same; and if there be any Prayer which is now dictated to any Man by the holy Spirit, that Prayer,

Prayer, if it were written down, would be as much Scripture, and as good Scripture, as the *Psalms of David*, or any other part of the *holy Bible*. For that which makes what we call *the Scripture* to be truly the Word of God, tho' spoken or written by Men, is because it was spoken and written by Inspiration of the *Holy Ghost*; by the same Reason therefore any other Prayer, any other Words of a Man, spoken by Inspiration of the same Spirit, is no less the *Word of God* than that is.

And yet, I believe, that if they who are us'd to hear the *extempore* Effusions of those who pretend to pray by the Spirit, would take the Pains to write them down from their Mouths, and would afterwards carefully peruse and examine them, they would easily be convinc'd of the Falsity of that Pretence; they would soon see the Difference between those Prayers and Scripture.

But be that as it will; yet, as I said before, to pray *by the Spirit*, i.e. to pray by Inspiration, however it may be suppo-

sed to be the *Privilege* and *Advantage* of some Men, that they do so, yet is no where commanded to any Man, as a *Duty*. All that is ever required of us, is, to pray *in the Spirit*, and to pray *with the Spirit*; and that, as I said, is a quite different thing from praying *by Inspiration*. For to pray *in the Spirit*, or *with the Spirit*, is nothing else but only to mind what we say, to give good Attention to our Prayers, and to accompany the Words of our Mouth with suitable Affections and Desires of the Heart. And thus we may pray *in the Spirit*, or *with the Spirit*, as well when we pray by a *Form*, as when we pray *extempore*. Nay, I believe it is much easier so to pray *in the Spirit*, or *with the Spirit*, i. e. to attend to what is said, and to go along with it in our Minds and Desires, when the Minister prays by a Form which we have been us'd to, and are well acquainted with, than it would be if he every time us'd a new Prayer.

And that this is the true scriptural meaning of praying *in*, or *with the Spirit*,

rit, and that it was not thereby intended to be laid upon us as a Duty, that we should pray by Inspiration of the holy Spirit, is, I think, very evident from 1 Cor. xiv. 15. *What is it then? I will pray with the Spirit, and I will pray with the Understanding also; I will sing with the Spirit, and I will sing with the Understanding also.* It is evident, I say, from hence, that we are no otherwise obliged to *pray with the Spirit*, than we are to *sing with the Spirit*. If therefore we do *sing with the Spirit*, when our Hearts go along with our Voices in *singing* any *Psalm*, or *Hymn*, which was composed and written down before; (and I presume no sober Person has any other Notion of *singing with the Spirit*, but this;) then so likewise may we *pray*, so also we do *pray with the Spirit*, when our Hearts and Minds go along with the Words which are utter'd in Prayer, whether the Prayer be spoken by our selves, or another; and whether it be utter'd *extempore*, or be a Form which was composed long before.

And most certainly, if our *Saviour*, who has commanded us to *worship* God *in Spirit*, and to *pray with the Spirit*, had not known that God might be worshipp'd and prayed to, in Spirit at least, as well by a set Form of Prayer, as by an *extempore* Effusion; when the Request was put to him by his Disciples, to *teach* them to *pray*; he would have taken that Occasion to tell them, that there was no need of their ever troubling themselves about that Matter, forasmuch as no Prayers would be acceptable to God, but such only as were immediately dictated or inspired by the *Holy Ghost*: so that consequently their best way would be never to pray at all, but only when they were moved to it by the Spirit, and then to pray *as the Spirit gave them Utterance*. He would not certainly, had he known that praying by a Form was unpleasing to God, (he would not, I say, then) have prescrib'd a Form of Prayer for them to use, as he did; when, in Answer to that their Request, *he said unto them, when ye pray,*

*pray, say, Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.*

III. The next thing I was to speak somewhat of, was the *Matter* of this Prayer. And concerning this, I shall observe only two things.

1. That it is a very full and comprehensive Form of Prayer; there being no Petition which we can at any time have Occasion to put up to God, either for our Souls, or for our Bodies; for our selves, or for others; which is not included in, and may not be reduced to, some or other of the Petitions of this short Prayer.

And this is a very good Reason, (besides the express Command of our Lord for the Use of it) why we should very frequently put up our Requests to God, in those very Words which are here taught us. Because tho' it may be expedient, that according as those Needs are which are most pressing upon us, or we are most sensible of, we should be sometimes more large and particular than we can be in the

Use of any general Form, suited, as this is, to the Condition of all Christians; yet it is not fit that our Thoughts and Desires should ever be so wholly bent upon those Subjects wherewith at present we are most affected, as to forget or overlook others, every whit as necessary to employ our Meditations about. And then we may be sure that we have omitted nothing proper to be requested of God, when we have supply'd the Defects of our own imperfect Prayers by the Super-addition of this most excellent, and most comprehensive Form of Prayer, which our Lord himself, who knew all our Needs, hath, in Compassion to our Weakness, taught us to make use of.

2. The other thing which I shall observe, concerning the Matter of this Prayer, is this; that tho' it was prescrib'd and given by our Lord himself, who being the *Wisdom* of the Father, and having *not received the Spirit by Measure*, had no need to copy or learn any thing from others, yet (as has been observed and made out

out by those versed in the *Jewish Learning*; [Grot. Cappel.]) there is nothing in this whole Prayer which could even then be accounted new, either in the Matter, or in the Expression of it; but that it is taken, every part of it, with very small Variation, out of those Forms of Prayer which were customarily used by the *Jews* in our *Saviour's Time*; [Comber.]

It appears therefore from hence, that our *Saviour* was no Affecter of Novelty in Devotion, no more than in other things. He was not one of those who disliked a good thing only because it was old. He was not of the Mind of some later Reformers, of greater Zeal than Discretion, who in their haste to root up the *Tares*, have had no regard to the *Wheat* which was mix'd with them; and in their Zeal to extirpate throughly all Superstition, have well-nigh destroy'd all Face of Religion. But our *Saviour* wisely distinguished between good and bad; and tho' he could, doubtless, have taught his Disciples a Prayer which was entirely new, yet chose rather to take the chief Materials of his   
Prayer

Prayer out of the Jewish Devotions, then in common Use; that so it might appear, that in the other Reformations which he made in Worship or Religion, he was not govern'd by Fancy, or guided by a Spirit of Faction or Schism, but acted wholly according to the Truth and Reason of things.

It is therefore no just Objection against the Liturgy of our Church, (if it were true, as it is not,) that it is taken out of what they call the *Mass-Book*; a Book in which it must be granted, and is readily own'd, there was a great Mixture of such Devotions, as must be allow'd to be not only superstitious, but idolatrous. For that's not the Question, what the Book was before it was reform'd, but what it is now that it is reform'd; not whether there were any Errors in it formerly, but whether there be any Errors left in it now. For if there be not, then it must be granted that it is well and sufficiently reformed; and the wise Compilers of our now most excellent Liturgy, in continuing in it some Prayers or Collects, which had

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been indeed in Use in the time of Popery, but which were also in Use in the Church long before the first beginning of Popery ; being Portions of the most ancient Liturgies in the first and purest Times of Christianity, (in continuing, I say, some such good Prayers and Collects in our present Liturgy, the wise Compilers of it) did no more than our *Saviour* himself did in the composing of his own Prayer, the whole Matter whereof was taken by him out of former Books of Devotion then in Use among the *Jews*. And for this we may well admire the Wisdom, Temper, and Judgment of our first Reformers ; but we can see nothing in what they did, which is in the least liable to blame. And without considering from whence they took any of the Materials of that Liturgy which they have left to us, we may truly say, that it is a most excellent Composition ; every whit as good as it would have been had it been entirely new, and in some Respects better.

From hence also it farther appears, (I mean from our *Saviour*'s taking into his own

own Prayer those Words, Expressions, and Forms of Speech, which had been formerly in Use; it appears, I say, from hence,) that God would not be better pleas'd with our Prayers, if they were offered up every Day in a new Style and Dress, than he is when they are offered up in the same Words; provided the Matter of them be good, and the Words of our Mouth be accompanied with the fervent Desires of our Heart. For most certainly, if new Phrases and Expressions had been more pleasing to God than old ones, our *Saviour* would never have prescrib'd any Form of Prayer to his Disciples; and much less would he have taken into this Form, those Petitions, and those Expressions thereof, which had been in Use in the *Jewish Church* long before.

IV. Lastly; another thing which I propos'd to consider in general, concerning the *Lord's Prayer*, was, the *Frame* and *Composure* of it. And concerning this we may observe, likewise, two things.

i. That

1. That the *Plural Number* is used throughout the whole Prayer. For 'tis not said *my Father*, but, *our Father*; not give *me my* daily Bread, but give *us*; not forgive *me*, but forgive *us our* Trespasses; and so on.

'Tis plain therefore, from hence, that this Prayer was design'd by our *Saviour*, chiefly to be used in Company with others, that it was meant for a publick Prayer. And from this it farther appears, that tho' our *Saviour*, at the 6<sup>th</sup> y. of this Chapter, (in Opposition to the Practice of the *Pharisees*, who, even in their single Devotions, always prayed openly, that they might be seen of Men;) had directed his Disciples to retire to a Closet, or some secret Place, where they might be sure not to be over-look'd or over-heard by any, and there to put up their Prayers in secret, to their Father who saw in secret; yet did not thereby design to forbid publick Prayer, at proper Seasons and Opportunities. What he meant to enjoin, was, that our private Prayers should, to avoid

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Ostentation, be as private as they could well be contriv'd; but then, that we might not misunderstand him, when he comes here to teach us how to pray, he puts into our Mouths such Words as were most proper to be used in Company: clearly intimating thereby, that private Devotions are not to exclude the publick; but that we ought also, at proper Seasons and Opportunities, to pray in Company with others.

Not but that we may, even when we are alone, use this Form of Prayer, and say, *Our Father*, &c. But then when we do so, the very Form of Speech which we use, shews, that tho' we are alone by our selves, we do extend our good Wishes to others besides our selves. For it would be very improper for a Man to say, give *us* *our* daily Bread, and forgive *us* *our* Trespasses, and the like, if he meant to beg these Blessings of God to and for himself only.

From this Form of Speech, therefore, which our *Saviour* himself here teaches us to use in our Prayers to God, *Our Father*,

ther, give *us*, forgive *us*, and the like ; we plainly learn, that it is our Duty to pray *with others*, and to pray *for others*, as well as alone, and for our selves.

2. Another thing which may be observ'd in the general Frame and Composure of this Prayer, is this ; that the three former Petitions of it regard the Honour and Glory of God ; *hallowed be thy Name* ; *thy Kingdom come* ; and *thy Will be done* : and 'tis after this only which we are taught or allow'd to put up Petitions for our selves ; *give us our daily Bread* ; *forgive us our Trespasses* ; *deliver us from Evil*, &c.

And what we should learn from hence, is ; that it is our Duty to make the Glory of God our chief Aim and Design, and to desire nothing else, not even for our selves, but in Subordination to that. According to that express Direction given us by our *Saviour* at the 33<sup>d</sup> ¶. of this Chapter ; *Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you* ; and that Precept of the

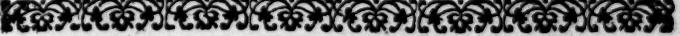
the *Apostle*, 1 Cor. x. 31. *Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do; do all to the Glory of God.*

*To him therefore, (1 Tim. i. 17.) the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be Honour and Glory, for ever and ever. Amen.*



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## DISCOURSE II.

The Preface of the Lord's Prayer  
explained.

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MATTH. vi. 9.

*After this Manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.*



UR Lord having in the foregoing Verses caution'd us against seeking Glory to our selves in our Addresses to God, and against ekeing out our Prayers to God

*vain Repetitions, and much speaking; as if, like the Heathens, we thought God could not well understand our Needs, unless we were very copious and particular in declaring them, or that he was pleas'd with a Multitude of Words; proceeds in the Text, and following Verses, to instruct us farther in the Duty of Prayer, by prescribing a Form of Words very proper to be used therein, which is what we commonly call The Lord's Prayer. Our Father which art in Heaven; hallowed be thy Name, &c.*

In which there are three principal Parts; the *Preface*, the *Body* of the *Prayer*, and the *Conclusion*.

The *Preface* is a solemn Invocation of God, to whom we direct our Prayer: *Our Father which art in Heaven.*

The *Body* of the *Prayer* consists of six several Petitions which we put up to him.

And the *Conclusion* contains a Doxology, or a solemn Recognition of the Power and Majesty of that God to whom we have offer'd up our Requests; *thine is the*

*the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory,  
for ever and ever.*

In serious Consideration whereof, we are taught, in the last place, to add our *Amen* to the whole. By which Word we signify not only our full and hearty Consent to all and every the Clauses of the foregoing Prayer, but also our Faith and Hope in God, that he will bestow upon us those things which we have ask'd of him.

In speaking of all which Particulars, I shall,

I. Explain the Meaning of each Clause, and shew what it is which we are therein and thereby taught to acknowledge to, or to beg of God; or what Sense we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter these Words. And,

II. I shall mention the Duties, which, from the several Clauses and Petitions of this Prayer, we are instructed in, and oblig'd to.

I. I now begin with the first part of the Prayer, *viz.* the *Preface*, which is, as I said, a solemn Invocation of God, to whom we direct our Prayer. *Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.*

And here we may consider, 1. The Object of Prayer in general, *viz.* God, called here, *Our Father in Heaven*: and, 2. What things we do, in this Compellation or Invocation of God, ascribe to him, and profess and declare our Belief of.

i. The Object of Prayer in general, *viz.* God called here, *Our Father in Heaven*. To him we are to direct our religious Prayers, and to none other, as our Saviour himself teacheth us most expressly, *Mat. iv. 10. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.*

There is neither Precept nor President for Creature-Worship in the whole Bible; not of the most glorious Angel in Heaven; much less of the Souls of departed Saints, suppos'd to be now advanc'd thither.

On the contrary, we are expressly forbidden in the first Commandment, to have any other God but Jehovah, i.e. to pay divine Worship to any other Being; and God hath said that he will, by no means, give his Honour to another.

And particularly, as to the Worship of Angels, which seems the most warrantable of any Creature-Worship, because they are the most excellent of all Creatures; that is not only expressly forbidden by the Apostle, Coloss. ii. 18. but when St. John, in some Astonishment at the glorious Ap-  
parition of an Angel, and thinking him, perhaps, to be the Deity assuming a visi-  
ble Shape, fell down to worship before  
him; we find him twice reprov'd for it by  
the Angel himself, Rev. xix. 10. and xxii. 9.  
in these Words, *see thou do it not; for I  
am thy Fellow-Servant; worship God.*

And how much the holy Apostles, who of all Men, who of all Creatures, next to the Angels, seem the most proper Objects of religious Worship, did abominate such Worship, we learn from two Examples, and those too of the two most eminent A-

postles; first of St. Peter, *Acts x. 26.* who, when *Cornelius* was fallen down at his Feet to worship him, *took him up, saying, stand up, I my self also am a Man:* and then of St. Paul, with St. Barnabas, who, when the People at *Lystra* took them for Gods, and would thereupon have done Sacrifice to them, *rent their Cloaths, and ran in among the People, saying, Sirs, why do you these things? We also are Men of like Passions with you; and preach unto you that ye should turn from these Vanities unto the living God, which made Heaven and Earth, and the Sea, and all things that are therein;* as you may see, *Acts xiv. 15.*

And yet in both these Cases the Objects, *viz.* the Angel, and these Apostles, were visibly present with those who would have worshipped them. It must therefore be worse still to give such Worship to any Creatures not visibly present, and who may, likely, not know any thing of what we are doing. For tho' the Angels are indeed in Heaven, in the Presence of God, yet their Knowledge of things is bounded and

and confin'd; and 'tis likely they may know nothing more of what is done upon Earth, than God is pleased to reveal to them. And as to the Saints departed, they as little know what we are doing, as we know where they are. *Abraham is ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledgeth us not*; so we are told, *Isaiah lxiii. 16*. And whether, if they do know any thing of us, they are in a Condition to do any Kindness for us, we know not; nor indeed whither to direct our Prayers to them for that Purpose. For all which we know of the State of the Souls of good Men departed, is, that *they rest from their Labours*, and that *they are in Peace*; but where their Abode is, God has not told us. All that I think we have ground from Scripture to believe concerning them, is, that tho' they are at present very happy, and are therefore said to be in *Paradise*, and in *Abraham's Bosom*; they are not however, as yet, in that exalted and glorifyed State, which they will be put into after the Resurrection, and final Judgment. Till then, therefore, (tho' indeed

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not then neither; but, I say, till then at least;) they can't be proper Objects of Worship; nor (as appears from Scripture,) were they ever thought so by any Person among the *Jews* or *Christians* in ancient times; unless we take the Parable of the *rich Man* and *Lazarus*, (*Luk. xvi.*) for a true History. For there indeed we have one Instance of Prayer made to a Saint departed, even to *Father Abraham*; but then, when it shall be considered who it was who put up that Prayer, *viz.* the *rich Glutton*; and where, and in what state he was when he put it up, even in *Hell*, or *Hades*, tormented in those *Flames*; I presume that Example will not be thought sufficient to warrant *Christians* upon Earth, in putting up Prayers to the Saints departed, as to a sort of Petty-Gods in Heaven.

This then being settled, that God, and God only, is the Object of a religious Prayer; whom we are here taught to call *Our Father in Heaven*. Let us now consider,

2. What

2. What things they are which, in this Compellation or Invocation of God, (composing the *Preface of the Lord's Prayer,*) we ascribe to him, and profess and declare our Belief of ; and they are chiefly these three,

(1.) The *Goodness* of God, and his *Readiness* to help us, and do us *Good*. This we own, by calling him *Father*.

(2.) The *Universality* of his *Goodness*, that it is not limited or confin'd to our selves only, or to a few, but is extended to all Mankind, to whom he is a common Father ; and to all whom he bears the same fatherly *Affection* which he does to us. And our Belief of this we profess by calling him *Our Father*, not *my Father*.

(3.) Lastly ; we likewise, in this *Preface*, declare our Belief of his *infinite Power* ; that he is as *able* as he is willing to do us *Good*. And this we declare, by calling  
him

him our *heavenly* Father, or our Father which is *in Heaven*.

And our Belief of these three things is a just ground of Faith and Confidence in God, and of Assurance that our Prayer will be regarded by him. For,

(1.) Being permitted to call him *Father*, and thereby assur'd that he bears us the Tenderness and Compassion of a Father, we may be confident that he is ready and willing to grant all the reasonable Desires and Requests of those to whom he is so related; according to that of the *Psalmist*, Psal. ciii. 13. *Like as a Father pitieith his Children, so the Lord pitieith them that fear him.* And so our *Saviour* argues, Matth. vii. 11. *If ye, being evil, know how to give good Gifts unto your Children; how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them (i.e. to his Children,) that ask him?* But,

(2.) If he was only a Father to some, and not to others of us, we might still be afraid

afraid whether our own Petitions in particular would be answered or not; because, whatever he is to others, we might doubt whether he was a Father to us or no; and there is no Man who could with good Confidence and Assurance say to him, *my Father*, if he could not also call him *our Father*.

But now being taught by our *Saviour* in this Prayer, which was design'd by him for the Use of every Member of his Church, to call him *Our Father*; extending, by that Expression, his fatherly Relation to the whole Race of Mankind; every Person, warranted or commanded to use this Prayer, is assured that God is a *Father* to him in particular, because he is so to us all.

And if he be the common Father of us all, and so alike related to every one of us, this gives us Assurance that he *is no Respecter of Persons*, but that *in every Nation, he that feareth God, and worketh Righteousness*, of what State or Condition soever he be in this World, *is accepted*

cepted with him, Acts x. 34, 35. But then,

(3.) Tho' he be our Father, and so has, we may be assured, a true Love and Kindness to us, and a good Will to help us, and to supply our Needs; yet he might possibly want Power to do us the Good which he would do. For this, we know, is the Case of many Fathers upon Earth; they do truly love, and most heartily wish well to their Children; and would, with all their Souls, give them Bread when they want it, and cry to them for it; but alas! they have it not to give, they themselves being many times as indigent and impotent as their Children; and so all which they can do for them, is to compassionate those their Wants, which they are not able to relieve. They have a ready Will enough to bestow all Good upon their Children, but they want Power to do them any Good at all.

But now God, our *beavenly Father*, is as powerful as he is good; he is as rich as he is bountiful; he is as able, as he is willing

willing to help us. And this we are taught to believe, and to acknowledge our Belief of, in this Preface to the Lord's Prayer, by calling him our Father which is *in Heaven*. For being *in Heaven* he is above all; he is the supreme Lord and Governor of the whole World; *he doth according to his Will in the Army of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth*; and none can stay his Hand, or say unto him, what doest thou? Dan. iv. 35. And, as for our God, says the Psalmist, he is *in Heaven*; *he hath done whatsoever pleased him*, Psal. cxv. 3.

In a word; our God being *in Heaven*, i. e. being the great God of Heaven and Earth, he can do whatever he will; and being *a Father*, he has the Love and Tenderness of a Father to all his Children; and being *Our Father*, and we, consequently, every one of us, his Children, we may reasonably hope and expect from him all the good things which we can ever want or desire. And more than this needs not to be believed by us, to excite in us a firm Faith, and a good Assurance,

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that

that all those Petitions which in the following Prayer we put up to him, (which, being taught us by our *Saviour* himself, we are sure are such as are agreeable to the Will of God;) will be graciously heard and answered by him. And all these things we do own and acknowledge, in this Preface to the Lord's Prayer, when we say, *Our Father which art in Heaven.*

"Tis as if we had said in more Words,  
" O good God, who, as the common  
" *Creator of us all*, art very kind and  
" gracious to all Men; who, as a *Father*,  
" art willing; and, as being *in Heaven*  
" most high, art able to give us all that  
" we want;" *hallowed be thy Name*, &c.

And so much for Explication of the first part of the Prayer, the Preface, or the Invocation.

But before I proceed farther, in the Explication of this Prayer, I shall (according to the Method before laid down) briefly mention the Duties, which, from this Preface to the following Petitions, we are instructed in, and oblig'd to.

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And there are several Points of Duty which we may learn from hence. For,

1. If we consider only the relative Appellation which we are here taught to give to God, by calling him *Father*; and thereby owning him to be the Author of our Being, the Giver of all good things, and very kindly affected towards us: this alone may serve to instruct us in several Duties. For,

(1.) If he be a Father to us, if he be the Author of our Being, and if it be he on whom we depend for the Supply of all our Wants; then we ought to respect and honour him, as a Son does his Father; giving him all possible Reverence, both in our Hearts and in our Actions.

For even natural Reason teaches us, that a Father ought to be honour'd and respected by his Children. And if the *Fathers of our Flesh* do deserve, and may claim Reverence from us, who were only the subordinate Means and Instruments of our coming into this World; much more

hath he an undoubted Title thereto, who created us out of nothing, and is the *Father* of our *Spirits*; who formed our Bodies into Shape, and breathed thereinto immortal Souls.

And thus the Prophet *Malachi*, or rather God himself speaking by the Prophet's Mouth, does most strongly argue, *Mal.* i. 6. *A Son honoureth his Father*, (i. e. he either doth so, or he ought to do so; and if he does otherwise, he is condemn'd by his own Reason and Conscience, as deficient in a necessary Point of Duty: *A Son honoureth his Father*,) and *a Servant his Master*; *if I then be a Father, where is mine Honour?*

(2.) If God be our Father, on whom we depend for all we are, have, or expect; then as we ought to shew great Reverence to him at all times, so then more especially when we approach his Presence, and while we continue in his Sight, and under his Eye.

A good Son does never, either in Words or Behaviour, speak or do any thing which  
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is slighting or disrespectful to his Father; but when he comes before him into his Presence, especially if it be with a Design to beg some Favour at his Hands, he then, be sure, behaves himself towards him with the most humble and lowly Carriage, and speaks to him in the most respectful and submissive manner. And if we do thus to our earthly Parents, much more should we do the same to our heavenly Father; who tho' he is pleased to attribute to himself the same Relation which a Father hath to his Son, and to call us his Children, is yet infinitely more superior to us, than our Fathers according to the Flesh are. For they, tho' under God they were the Givers of our Being to us; are yet of the same Species with our selves, neither are they in their own Nature more excellent than the Children which are begotten by them; whereas his most excellent Nature is at an infinite Distance from ours: so that had not he himself encouraged us to it, it would have been the boldest Presumption imaginable, in us, so much as to have styled him our

Father. Whenever therefore we come into his Presence, especially if it be to put up any Petition to him, it highly becomes us to shew all possible Signs of the profoundest Reverence, and most lowly Submission to him. And as we should approach him with the deepest Humility of Mind, so should we also use the most humble Prostrations of Body; standing bare in his Presence, and falling low on our Knees before his Footstool. And if we do not demean our selves thus towards him, our Behaviour is manifestly not such, as the Behaviour of Children towards their Father ought to be.

For let me ask any Man, who is a Father, whether if his Son, (tho', as I said before, of the same Nature with himself, and, bating the Relation, as good in all Respects as himself;) when he came to him to beg a Favour of him, should before he began, or at any time while he was making his Address, take a Chair, and sit down (as we say) *Cheek by Joll* with him; he would not think such disrespectful and unmannery Carriage a just barr  
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to his granting the thing which was requested of him ; if not rather a just Provocation to the casting him wholly out of Favour, and of forbidding him his Presence for ever ? What then can you think of those (what can you think of your selves ? if this be your own Practice ; as it evidently is of too many even at the Church, in the publick Assemblies ;) who use the same irreverent and unmannerly Posture, when they are offering up their Petitions, nay, when they are uttering this very Prayer to God ? What mean they by calling him Father, when, by their Behaviour towards him, one would think they hardly thought him so good as their Equal ? Or if indeed they do believe his fatherly Relation, and his infinite Superiority to themselves , how can they behave themselves with greater Unmannerliness to him, while they are imploring his Mercy and Goodness, than they would do to any Man, tho' much their Inferior, while they were requesting any Favour or Kindness from him ? How can they but fear that such their unmannerly and irre-

verent Behaviour should provoke God, not only to deny and reject their present Petitions, but to forbid them from ever more appearing in his Presence, or expecting any Favour from him?

And let it not here be said, that *the Lord seeth not as Man seeth*; for *Man looketh on the outward Appearance*, but *the Lord looketh on the Heart*. For tho' this indeed be true, (for they are the Words of God himself, concerning himself, in *1 Sam. xvi. 7.*) 'tis yet no Excuse, much less is it a Reason for the Irreverence of our Worship. For what can these Words mean, *the Lord seeth not as Man seeth*? Can they mean, that God does not see so much as Man? No surely; but that he sees a great deal more than Man does; he sees all which Man sees; and he sees also what Men does not see. And so it follows, *for Man looketh on the outward Appearance*, i. e. he sees that, and he sees nothing else; he can but only gues at the Heart, by that outward Appearance which he sees: but *God looketh on the Heart*; i. e. God looks directly in-

to

to that; that's as plain before his Sight, as a visible Object is before the Sight of a Man. But tho' he sees things which are invisible to us, it does not therefore follow, that he does not see the things which are visible even to our Eyes. He therefore sees, at least as well as we do, whether a Man's Behaviour in the time of Worship be decent or indecent, reverent or irreverent; the Difference is, that whereas if a Man behaves himself decently and reverently in the Worship of God, we have no Reason but to think that he is a devout and religious Worshipper; God, who sees directly into his Heart, may know infallibly that he is not so: but if a Man's Behaviour be indecent and irreverent, even in our Sight, it is doubtless so in God's Sight too, and consequently infinitely more offensive to him than it is to us. For as God requires the Worship of the Heart, so he requires the Worship of the Body too. *O come let us worship, and fall down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker:* that's what God exacts from us, and what he has

Reason to exact; the Worship of our Bodies, because he was the Maker of them, as well as the Worship of our Soul, because he sees into that. And as both Body and Soul were made by him, so were they likewise both redeem'd by him. So that to worship him with either the Soul only, (if that could be,) or with the Body only, (which may be, and too often is,) is either of them but giving him some part, but half at most, of the Worship which belongs to him, and is his due. And so we are taught by the *Apostle*, 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. *Your Bodyye have of God, and ye are not* (your Body more than your Soul,) *your own. For ye are bought with a Price, therefore glorify God in your Body, and in your Spirit, which are God's.*

(3.) If God be our Father, and we his Children, we ought to endeavour to resemble him, and to be as like him as possibly we can.

Now he created us at first in his own Image, and after his own Likeness; but this

this Image we have foully defaced ; this Likeness we have, in great Measure, worn off by Sin ; rendring our selves thereby more like to the *Devil*. And while we continue to do the Devil's Works, so long we are the Devil's Children, and not God's ; so long the Devil will own us, but God will not. *Ye are of your Father the Devil*, says our Saviour to the unbelieving Jews ; and the *Works of your Father ye will do*, John viii. 44.

But tho' we are, by a Course of Sin, greatly degenerated from our first Stock, it is yet still in our Power, thro' the Assistance of God's Grace, to be restor'd by Adoption, to that same Relation to God from which we have fallen. And this Relation we are restor'd to by our Regeneration in Baptism, at which time *the Spirit of his Son is sent forth into our Hearts, crying, Abba, Father*, Gal. iv. 6. And this Relation will be inviolably preserv'd, so long as we make it our sincere Endeavour to conform our selves to his Likeness, to be holy and pure, just and merciful, as he is ; and to resemble him

as

as much as we can in all his imitable Perfections.

This therefore we ought to do; or else we ought not, else we cannot in good Reason call him *Father*. To be truly his Children we must be like him; we must, as the *Apostle* speaks, *Coloss.* iv. 23, 24. *be renewed in the Spirit of our Minds, and put off concerning the former Conversation the old Man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Lusts; and put on the new Man, which, after God, is created in Righteousness and true Holiness.* And, *be ye Followers of God, as dear Children*, says the same *Apostle*, *Eph. v. 1.* There, from this Relation which we bear to God, he argues our Obligation to conform our selves to his Likeness. St. Peter also urges the same Argument to the same Purpose, *1 Pet. i. 14.* *As obedient Children, not fashioning your selves, according to the former Lusts in your Ignorance; but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of Conversation: because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy.* And from

from the same Relation our *Saviour* himself also infers the same Duty, *Matth. v. 48.*

*Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect.*

(4.) If God be our *Father*, it is then also our Duty (a Duty plainly resulting from this Relation which we stand in towards God,) to trust in him, and to depend upon him, as Children do in and upon their Parents. Especially, when we have not only good Ground in Reason to believe, that, as our Father, he bears a fatherly Affection to us, sincerely desires our Welfare and Happiness, and consequently will deny us nothing necessary, in order to it ; but have also the sure Word of God, as a farther, and indeed more certain Foundation, of such our Trust and Affiance in his Goodness. For by that we are assur'd, *Psal. ciii. 13. That like as a Father pitieth his Children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.* And our *Saviour* himself, after he had given us a general Promise or Assurance of God's Readiness to do all for us which we can reasonably

reasonably desire or request of him, in *Luke xi. 9, 10. Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.* For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened; proceeds then, at the 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, and 13<sup>th</sup> Verses, to declare the rational Ground we had for such Assurance, even antecedently to his own Promise; that so our Belief of his Promise might be without any the least Doubtfulness or Distrust, in these Words; *If a Son shall ask Bread of any of you that is a Father, will he give him a Stone? Or if he ask a Fish, will he for a Fish give him a Serpent? Or if he ask an Egg, will he offer him a Scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good things unto your Children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit (or, as 'tis express'd in St. Matthew's Gospel, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things, i. e. all things which are good,) to them that ask him?*

(5.) If

(5.) If God be our *Father*, then it is plainly our Duty to behave our selves *obediently*, as well as respectfully towards him, in all things. For the Name of a *Father* implies in it, not only Eminence and Superiority, but also Authority. A *Father* may require Obedience to his Commands, as well as Respect to his Person. *Children obey your Parents in all things*, (says the *Apostle*, *Coloss.* iii. 20.) *for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord*; that is, it is the Will of God that ye should do so. And again, *Eph.* vi. 1. *Children obey your Parents in the Lord*, *for this is right*; that is, 'tis what is just and reasonable, fit and becoming; 'tis a Duty which natural Reason dictates, as well as which is enjoin'd by the express Command of God.

But if it be reasonable that we should obey, *in all things*, the Commands of our earthly Parents; who being but Men, and of like Passions and Infirmities with their Children, may, thro' Ignorance or Peevishness, or only for the Exercise of their

their own Power, lay upon their Children such Commands as are hard and rigorous; difficult to be perform'd, and which, when done, may not tend in the least to promote either their Children's Good, or their own; much more is it highly reasonable that we should, not only in all things, but also with all Readines and Clearfulness set our selves to obey the Commands of God, our heavenly Father; who not only, as he is our Father, has full Right and Authority to lay what Commands he pleases upon us, and to require our Obedience thereto, (even tho' they were hard and rigorous, and such as no Reason or Account could be given of, besides his own Will and Pleasure only;) but who also infinitely exceeds, both in Wisdom and Goodness, the wifest and best Fathers upon Earth; upon which Accounts we may be assur'd that he never commands any thing but what is both reasonable for him to require, and also very expedient, and much for our own Good to perform. *He hath shewed thee, O Man, says the Prophet, what is good; and what doth the*

*Lord thy God require of thee, but to do justly, and to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? Micah vi. 8.* These are all the Commands of our kind and indulgent Father; he enjoins us nothing but what is both good in it self, and for our good: and therefore if we do not obey him in these Commands, as we shall shew our selves to be none of his obedient Children, so neither can we reasonably hope that he will own us as such, or be any longer a loving Father to us. *If, says St. Peter, ye call on the Father, i. e. if ye call on God as your Father, who, without Respect of Persons, judgeth according to every Man's Work; pass the time of your sojourning here in Fear.* For indeed, with what Face can we presume to call him *Father*, if we reject his fatherly Authority? Or how can we hope that he should love us, and deal with us as good Children, while we refuse to give him the Obedience of Sons?

(6.) Lastly; the same Relation of a *Father*, which God bears to us, makes it

it likewise reasonable for us to submit with Meekness and Patience to all his Corrections. This Duty the *Author* to the *Hebrews* infers from this Relation, *Heb.* xii. 5, &c. and he also enforces it with such Reasons, grounded thereupon, that nothing more shall need to be said upon this Head, but what we read there in the Apostle's own Words. *My Son, despise not thou the chastning of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth he chastneth, and scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth. If ye endure Chastning, God deal- eth with you as with Sons; for what Son is he whom the Father chastneth not? But if ye be without Chastisement, whereof all are Partakers, then are ye Bastards, and not Sons. Furthermore, we have had Fathers of our Flesh which corrected us, and we gave them Reve- rence; shall we not much rather be in Subjection to the Father of Spirits, and live? For they verily, for a few Days, chastned us after their own Pleasure; but he, for our Profit; that we might be*

be Partakers of his Holiness. Now no chastning, for the present, seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward, it yeildeth the peaceable Fruit of Righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby; *Heb. xii. 5—11.* But,

2. As God is a Father, so he is also *Our Father*. We are taught to call him so in this Prayer; *Our Father*; that is, a Father not to our selves only, but to all the rest of our Race. And the Consideration of this may likewise remind us of, and strongly enforce upon us, sundry Duties. For,

(1.) If God be a *common Father* to us all, then all we are *Brethren*. His common Relation, as a *Father*, to us, unites us in a very near Relation to one another.

And if all Men are our Brethren, we are all so far in a State of Equality with each other. We ought not therefore to despise, reproach, or vilify any Person whatsoever; because how much soever he may be our Inferior in some little worldly

G Respects,

Respects, he stands in the same Relation to God that we do. We ought not therefore, I say, to bear our selves high over others, as if they were our Slaves and Vassals; seeing that, in truth, they are our Brethren, and in all considerable Respects equal to our selves.

Moreover, God being our common Father, and all we, as his Children, Brethren to each other; we ought all, as the *Apostle* exhorts, to *love as Brethren*, to be *pitiful*, and to be *courteous* to each other. For that Brethren should love one another, is so clear a Law of Nature, and so deeply engraven in all our Hearts, that none can be ignorant of it. And indeed, as there was no Need of an express Revelation to enjoin a Duty so easy to be discern'd, and so well known; so I do not remember that there is any where, either in the *Old* or *New Testament*, in the Law or in the Gospel, any positive Precept directly commanding it. It is rather, all along suppos'd and taken for granted, as a Duty which could not but be known and allow'd by all; that Brethren ought to love one another.

There

There is indeed mention sometimes made in Scripture, of *brotherly Love*; but it is not, I think, any where expressly commanded to be exercised by and between those who (as being born of the same common Parents, according to the Flesh;) are most properly called *Brethren*; because, as it seems, there was no Need of a positive Command to oblige us to a Duty which Nature so clearly dictates, and so strongly urges upon our Practice; but the Design of all those Texts, which require the Exercise, or the Continuance of *brotherly Love*, is only to propose that Love which Brothers do naturally bear to each other, as the Pattern and Measure of that Love which all Men ought to bear to one another, even altho' they are not quite so nearly related together, as Brothers according to the Flesh are.

(2.) If God be our *Father*, and *all we* are Brethren; seeing consequently, he bears the same good Will to all of us, and we have all the same Needs and Wants, and the same common Requests

to make to God ; it hence becomes our Duty, and a very reasonable Duty too, to join together, as we have Opportunities, in great Numbers, to offer up our common Petitions to him. This is plainly most glorious to God ; the Multitude of his Worshippers, owning their Dependence upon him, best sets forth the Large-ness of his Dominion, and the Extent of his Power. And this is also best for our selves ; because the greater the Number is of those who join together in Prayer, the better Assurance may they reasonably entertain of the good Success of their Prayer. For if it may well be presumed that a good Father will not deny the reasonable Request of any *one* of his Children, much more may it be trusted to, and depended upon, that he will not deny the like reasonable Request of *all* his Children ; or of a *great many* of them, when they join together in putting up the same common Petition to him.

(3.) If God be *our Father* ; the Father, not of one, two, or a few Men, but of the

the whole Race of Mankind; then it plainly follows, that whether we pray with others, or by our selves, we ought always, even in our Prayers by our selves, and principally for our selves, to be mindful also of others, and to beg the same things of God for them, which we beg for our selves. Indeed we can't ever, either in publick or in private, put up this most excellent Prayer, taught us by our Lord himself, without doing so. For by styling God *our Father*, we extend his fatherly Relation to others besides our selves; and by saying give *us our* daily Bread, and forgive *us our* Trespasses, and the like, we beg the same things for all those to whom he is a Father, which we do for our selves.

And that thus we ought to do, and are taught to do in this Prayer, our Church likewise instructs us, in that short Explanation of it which she has given in her Catechism, when in answer to that Question, *What desirest thou of God in this Prayer?* The Scholar is taught to answer, *I desire my Lord God, our heavenly Fa-*

*ther, who is the Giver of all Goodness, to send his Grace unto me, and to all People.* But,

3. Lastly; as God is *a Father*, and *our Father*, so he is likewise our *heavenly Father*, or *Our Father which is in Heaven*, as we are here taught to call him; by which Phrase, *which art in Heaven*, we acknowledge (as has been already shewed) the Greatness of God's Power, and the Extent of his Dominion. And the Duties which we learn from hence are chiefly these two.

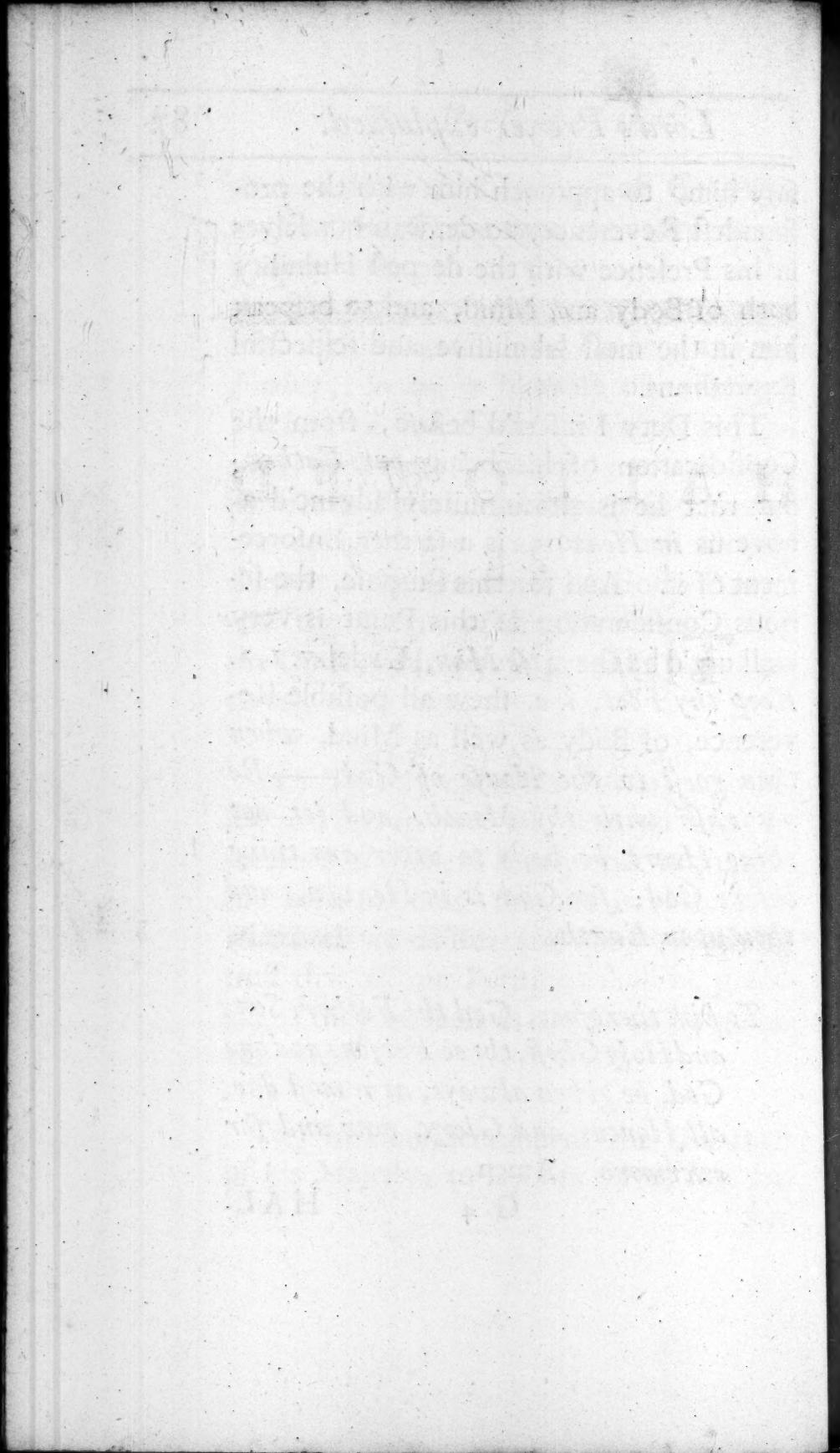
(1.) To rely upon his Power, who being in Heaven over all, can do what he pleases; to believe firmly that nothing is too hard for him, that he is able to do whatever we desire; and consequently to trust that all our Petitions shall be granted, if they be such as are fit to be granted. And,

(2.) In Consideration of the Greatness of his Majesty, to lay our selves low before

fore him, to approach him with the profoundest Reverence, to demean our selves in his Presence with the deepest Humility both of Body and Mind, and to bespeak him in the most submissive and respectful Expressions.

This Duty I inferr'd before, from the Consideration of his being *our Father*; but that he is also infinitely advanc'd above us *in Heaven*, is a farther Enforcement of it. And for this Purpose, the serious Consideration of this Point is very well urg'd by the *wise Man*, Eccles. v. 1, 2. *Keep thy Foot*, i. e. shew all possible Reverence, of Body as well as Mind, *when thou goest to the House of God*.—*Be not rash with thy Mouth*, and let not thine Heart be hasty to utter any thing before God; for God is in Heaven, and thou upon Earth.

*To him therefore, God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three Persons and one God, be given always, as is most due, all Honour and Glory, now and for evermore. Amen.*





H A L L O W E D

B E

Thy NAME,

EXPLAINED.



Q E W O I J A H

U M A M Y H

E X T R A N G E



## DISCOURSE III.

*Hallowed be thy Name, explained.*



MATTH. vi. 9. latter part.

— *Hallowed be thy Name.*



HE Prayer here taught by our *Saviour Christ* to his Disciples, commonly called *the Lord's Prayer*, consists (as I have formerly observed) of three principal parts; I. The Preface, which is a solemn Compellation or Invocation of God; *Our Father*

*Father which art in Heaven:* II. The Body of the Prayer, which consists of six Petitions: and, III. The Conclusion, which contains 1. A Doxology, or solemn Recognition or Acknowledgment of the Power and Majesty of that God to whom we offer up our Petitions, *for thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory, for ever and ever:* and, 2. An Expression of our hearty Concurrence and Agreement with every Clause of the foregoing Prayer, and of our Assurance of God's Power and Willingness to grant our Petitions, in the Word, *Amen.*

And the Method wherein I have already propos'd to treat of all these Particulars, is this;

I. I propounded, as I go along, to explain the Meaning of each Clause in this Prayer; to shew what it is, that therein, and thereby we are taught to acknowledge to, or to beg of God; or what Sense we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter the Words of this Prayer. And,

II. To

II. To mention the Duties, which, from the severall Clauses and Petitions of this Prayer, we are instructed in, and obliged to.

And in this Method I have already discoursed of the first part of this Prayer, *viz.* of the Preface; which is a solemn Compellation or Invocation of Almighty God, a Direction of our Speech to him, in these Words; *Our Father which art in Heaven.*

I proceed now in the next Place,

II. To discourse of the second part of this Prayer, which I call'd the Body of it; and that (as I have before observed) consists of six Petitions; whereof the three first chiefly respect God's Glory, *hallowed be thy Name, thy Kingdom come, and thy Will be done;* and the three last, our own Good; *give us this Day our daily Bread, &c.*

From which Order of these Petitions we may very well be reminded of that Duty which is taught us at the 33<sup>d</sup> y. of this

this Chapter, seek first the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you; and by the Apostle, in 1 Cor. x. 33. Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the Glory of God.

In treating of these Petitions of the Lord's Prayer, I begin with the first of them; *hallowed be thy Name.*

And here (according to the Method before laid down,) I shall shew,

I. What Meaning we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter these Words in the Lord's Prayer; *hallowed be thy Name.* And,

II. What Duties we are instructed in from hence.

I. What Sense we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter these Words in the Lord's Prayer; *hallowed be thy Name.*

And indeed this Petition seems to me the hardest to be understood of any in the Lord's Prayer, and the most like to be repeated

repeated by some of those who use it, without understanding what they say ; but nevertheless, the Meaning of it may, I suppose, in a very few Words, be made plain even to the meanest Capacities.

In order to which it is to be noted,

1. That the Name of God is most commonly, if not always, in holy Scripture, set to signify God himself. Thus, when 'tis said in the third Commandment, *Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain*; the Meaning is, that we should not invoke or call upon God to be a Witness to a Vanity, or a Falshood ; and so when in 1 Kings xviii. 24. *Elijah*, speaking to the Priests of *Baal*, says, *Call ye on the Name of your Gods, and I will call on the Name of the Lord*. What he meant is plainly this, that they should pray to their Gods to answer them by Fire, and that he would do the same to *Jehovah*, in order to satisfy the People, by the Success of their Prayers, which was the true God; *the God that answereth by Fire, let him be God*. And so when

when in *Psalm* xxi. 1. 'tis said, *The Lord bear thee in the Day of Trouble, the Name of the God of Jacob defend thee*; 'tis evident that both these Clauses mean the same thing; so that, *the Name of the God of Jacob defend thee*, is all one as if it had been said, *may the God of Jacob defend thee*. And thus, (to name no more Instances of this,) in *Exod.* xxxiii. 19. when *Moses* had desired to see the Glory and Majesty of God, that is, to see God himself; he is told by God, that it was impossible for him to be seen by mortal Eyes; but, says God, this I will do for thee; *I will make all my Goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the Name of the Lord before thee*; i.e. I will declare to thee in Words, what are the glorious Excellencies and Perfections of my Nature; for so 'tis said in *Exod.* xxxiv. 5, 6, 7. where this Promise was made good to *Moses*; *the Lord descended in a Cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the Name of the Lord; and the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful*

merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in Goodness and Truth, &c.

And this way of speaking, viz. that by the Name of God should be meant God himself, is not much different from our common way of speaking, in which, by the mention of some Attribute or Property of a Man, we often mean his Person; or when we say, the *King's Majesty*, we mean the King; tho' yet, in strictness, the Person of the King, and his Dignity or Majesty, are not the same; and so when we say, *his Worship*, *his Honour*, *his Highness*, *his Excellence*, or the like, what we mean by these Expressions, is, that Person who is worshipful, or honourable, or high, or excellent.

When therefore we pray that God's Name may be hallowed, the Meaning is, that God himself may be hallowed.

But *hallowed*; what is that? What is it to hallow God; or to hallow the Name of God? This Word does not less need to be explained than the other.

2. Therefore 'tis to be noted, that to hallow a thing signifies either to make it holy by a Consecration of it to religious Uses, or else to use it as a holy thing after it is so consecrated.

(1.) To hallow a thing, signifies, primarily, to separate it, or to set it apart for sacred Uses. Thus we hallow a Church, when we solemnly appropriate any Edifice or Building to the Worship of God. Thus a Day is hallowed, when it is destin'd and appointed to the Exercise of Religion; and a Person is hallowed, when (in the Scripture Phrase,) he is given to the Lord, as *Samuel* was, (1 Sam. i. 11.) i. e. when he is consecrated, and solemnly devoted to God's Worship and Service.

And in this Sense the Word is plainly used in the fourth Commandment, where 'tis said, *in six Days the Lord made Heaven and Earth, the Sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh Day, wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath Day, and hallowed it,* Exod. xx. 11.

God

God hallowed it, i. e. for the Reason before mentioned; he made a Difference between that and other Days, and appointed that Day, on which he himself had rested, to be kept by Men as an holy Day, in a Rest from the common Labours of Life, and in the Exercises of Religion. God hallowed the seventh Day, by appropriating it to sacred Uses, and commanding Men to keep it holy.

(2.) A secondary Use of the Word, *hallow*, is to use as holy, a thing, which by such solemn Consecration or Dedication hath been separated from common Uses, and appropriated to God or Religion: and therefore, as God himself is said to have hallowed the Sabbath Day, so he did likewise command Men to hallow it, as you may see in *Jer. xvii. 22.* *Hallow ye the Sabbath Day, as I commanded your Fathers.*

But the way wherein God did hallow it, and that wherein Men are to hallow it, are clearly different; God hallowed the Sabbath, when he set it apart, and

appropriated it to religious Uses; when he commanded it to be kept as an holy Day to himself: and Men do hallow it, when they use it in such manner as they are commanded to do, when they spend it in Religion, when they keep it as an holy Day ought to be kept. *If, says God by the Prophet Jeremy, (in the 24<sup>th</sup> v. of the Chapter before cited,) ye diligently hearken unto me, to bring in no Burden thro' the Gates of this City on the Sabbath Day, but hallow the Sabbath Day, to do no Work therein; then shall there enter into the Gates of this City Kings, &c.*

The Question therefore is, in which of these two Senses the Word *hallow* is used, in this Petition of the Lord's Prayer; *hallowed be thy Name*; whether we mean thereby to wish or desire that God's Name, i. e. (as was said before,) that God himself may be holy, or else that he may be treated as holy; and 'tis plain that it can well be understood in the first Sense. For what is already, and can never be otherwise than it is, cannot be a proper Subject  
of

of a Wish or Petition. But God himself is holy, his Name is holy, and his Attributes are holy, and all things relating to him are holy; God is so essentially holy, that he cannot possibly be prophaned or polluted by Men or Devils, so as to lose any thing of his infinite and essential Purity; and therefore 'tis needless for us to pray that God may be, or that he may continue holy in himself, for he can't be otherwise; he can no more ever cease to be holy, than he can cease to be God. All therefore which we can mean, when we pray that the Name of God (*i. e.* that God) may be hallowed, is, that he may be used and treated by Men according to his Nature; that as he is really in himself holy, so he may be esteemed and worshipped, and reverenced by Men as such.

In short, when we pray that God's Name may be hallowed or sanctified, we express our hearty Desire that God may be worshipped, honoured, and glorified by us, and by all his Creatures, as he ought to be; that he may ever be (as indeed he deserves to be) most highly esteemed and

respected by us ; that he may receive from us, and from all Men, the Praise and Glory which is due to him.

This is the meaning of this Clause in the Lord's Prayer, *hallowed be thy Name*, if we understand it as a Prayer or Petition.

But this Sentence may be understood, as expressing our Acknowledgment of what is, as well as our Desire of what may be; we, in using this Form of Speech, *hallowed be thy Name*, may well be understood, as thereby actually giving that Praise and Honour to God which is his Due, and which, at the same time, we desire may be given him by all others.

For thus, when in the Contemplation of any Mercy, or good thing received from God, we say, *God be thanked*, or *praised be God*, or *blessed be the Name of God*, or the like ; tho' these Phrases are expressed in the Form of a Wish or Petition, (for to say, let such a thing be so, or so, is all one as to say, we wish or desire that it may be so, or so;) yet what we mean by these Phrases, is, to acknowledge

ledge the good thing received to be the Gift of God, and to give him Thanks for the same. He who says, thanks be to God, means, I do give him Thanks ; or if he says, praised be God, he means, I do praise him ; or if he says, blessed be the Name of God, he means, I do bless his Name. And so I say here ; when we use this Sentence in the Lord's Prayer, *hallowed be thy Name*, it may as well be understood by us as a Thanksgiving to God for Mercies receiv'd, as a Prayer that God may be honoured and glorified by us. And when the Sentence is so plainly capable of these two Senses, I see no Reason why we should not, but rather, I think there is great Reason that we should, have them both in our Minds ; and that whenever we repeat these Words, we should do that our selves, which we seem to desire may be done both by our selves and others ; that is, that we should then with a grateful Heart for the Mercies which we have receiv'd from God, actually render him that Praise, which (as being sensible it is

his Due,) we pray may be given him by us, and by all Men.

When therefore we use this Clause in the Lord's Prayer, *hallowed be thy Name*, this we should mean to say, this Sense we should have in our Minds; “ We are sensible, O Lord, how much we are engag’d to thee for all the Expressions of thy Bounty; for our Life it self, which we owe to thee our Father, from whom we receiv’d our Being; and for all the Comforts of our Life, the Fruits of thy fatherly Care and Protection: we therefore praise and bless, and magnify thy Name for all thy Mercies; but we know we cannot praise thee so much as we should do; thy glorious Name is exalt’d above all Blessing and Praise; we pray thee therefore to increase our Thankfulness, that we may daily praise thee more and more. Let our Mouth shew forth thy Righteousnes and thy Salvation all the Day, for we know not the End thereof; and mayest thou also, O God, our heavenly Father, who art the Author and Giver of all good things, and

“ and whose Mercies are over all thy  
“ Works; (mayest thou) be known to all  
“ the World, how great and how good  
“ thou art; mayest thou be esteemed and  
“ loved, praised and honoured, glorified  
“ and worshipped, by us and by all Men,  
“ as thou oughtest to be; we know the  
“ highest Praises are thy Due, and we  
“ heartily desire they may be given thee by  
“ all.” *Hallowed be thy Name.*

And now having explained the Meaning of this Clause or Petition in the Lord's Prayer, and shewn what Sense we ought to have in our Minds when we utter these Words, I proceed in the second Place, (according to the Method before laid down,) 

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## II. To shew what Duties we are instructed in, and may learn from it.

And this is certain, that we ought at all times to endeavour that our selves, which we pray unto God for; and if we do not, it is a certain Sign that our Desire of what we pray for is not sincere and hearty: for what a Man earnestly desires, he naturally and of Course seeks to procure  
all

all the ways he can. And in any Case whatsoever, if a Man plainly neglects the necessary Means of obtaining a thing, it may be certainly concluded from thence, that he is not very sollicitous about it, that he is not much concerned whether he has it or no. When therefore we are taught to pray that God's Name may be hallowed, we are taught at the same time to endeavour, all that lies in our Power, to procure to God, from our selves and from all his Creatures, that Worship, Glory, and Service, which, in this Petition of the Lord's Prayer, we desire may be given him by all. And,

1. Our Care must begin at home ; if therefore we do indeed desire that God may be honoured by all, with the Glory which is due unto him, we ought in the first Place to take Care that we our selves be not failing and deficient in this Duty ; and above all, that we do never, in Word or Deed, do any thing which is repugnant to our own Petition.

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As a part of the Duty, therefore, which we are instructed in, and oblig'd to, by our Use of this Clause of the Lord's Prayer; *hallowed be thy Name*; it is,

(1.) First of all our indispensable Duty to be very diligent and constant in the Worship of God, by which he is most directly honoured by Men; and especially in his publick Worship, by which he is more honoured than by our private Service.

We ought therefore (and if we do indeed wish and desire, as we pray, that God's Name may be hallowed, we can't do otherwife; we ought, I say,) to be very frequent in Thanksgivings to God for Mercies receiv'd, and in putting up our Requests to him for the good things which we want; for our sole and whole Dependence is upon him; he is indeed the Author of all that we have, and 'tis from him only that we can receive all that we stand in need of: and therefore we our selves shall be deficient in giving him his due Honour, which in this Petition of the Lord's Prayer we desire may be

be given by all, unless, as the *Apostle* directs, *1 Thess. v. 17, 18.* we do *pray without ceasing, and in every thing give Thanks:* unless (as he directs in another Place,) we do *in every thing, by Prayer and Supplication, with Thanksgiving, let our Requests be made known unto God,* *Phil. iv. 6.*

(2.) It is another Branch of the Duty which we are instructed in by this Clause of the Lord's Prayer, to be careful to worship God in such a manner as he ought to be worshipped; *i. e.* as our *Saviour* directs, in *Job. iv. 23, 24.* *in Spirit and in Truth.* *The Hour cometh,* says he, *and now is, when the true Worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him:* *God is a Spirit, and they that worship him (i. e. they who would worship him acceptably,) must worship him in Spirit and in Truth.* *i. e.* We must worship him in a manner agreeable to his Nature, and according to his own Directions; being a Spirit, we must worship

ship him as a Spirit, and with our Spirits; we must not entertain gross Conceptions and Notions of God in our Minds, as the *Heathens* did, conceiving him to be like unto a Man, or unto any thing else which is visible by corporeal Eyes, for this is to change the *Glory of the uncorruptible God into an Image made like to corruptible Man, and to Birds, and four-footed Beasts, and creeping things*, Rom. i. 23. Neither must we think to please him, who is a pure Spirit, and sees perfectly thro' us, with the Service of our Lips, without the Service of our Heart. And if we do not observe these, and such other Directions as are given us in the holy Scripture, concerning God's Worship, our Worship it self, by which we pretend, and would seem to honour him, will indeed be dishonourable to him, the Manner of our Prayers will destroy the Matter of them; and we shall contradict our own Petitions, when we say, *hallowed be thy Name.*

(3.) A farther Branch of this Duty of hallowing God, or hallowing the Name of God,

God, is to shew a due Respect and Reverence to all things which are consecrated to God, to all things which have Relation to him, to all things upon which his holy Name is called.

Thus then we are to comply with our own Desire and Petition, that God may be hallowed or sanctified,

1st. By giving Reverence, for his Sake, to the *Places* consecrated to his Worship, according to that Precept in *Lev. xix. 30.*  
*Te shall reverence my Sanctuary, I am the Lord.* And as a Token of our just Reverence to the Sanctuary, or House of God, it is our Duty constantly to frequent the Places appointed for his publick Worship, and to behave our selves reverently therein, according to the Direction of the wise Man, *Eccles. v. 1.* *Keep thy Foot when thou goest to the House of God.*

2dly. The same we are to do to the Times set apart for Religion; *Te shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my Sanctuary;* so 'tis commanded in the Law before

fore cited. And this we do, when we forbear (as much as may be) our secular Works and Employments upon the Days which are consecrated and set apart for God's Service, and spend the same in Works of Piety and Charity.

*3dly.* The like Reverence and Respect we are likewise to shew to the *holy Word* of God, by diligent Study of the *holy Scripture*; by taking Delight in the Law of the Lord, and meditating therein Day and Night, (*Psal. i. 2.*) by taking good Heed thereto, and receiving it as the *Oracles of God*; by readily and heartily believing all the Doctrines which it teaches, and diligently practising all the good Lessons which we learn from thence.

*4thly.* And lastly; we do honour to God, when, for his Sake, we give Honour and Respect to his *Ministers*, giving Heed to their good Instructions, learning the Law from their Mouth, following their godly Admonitions, imitating their virtuous Examples, and esteeming them very highly

in Love for their Works sake ; *i. e.* upon the Account of the Relation which they have to God, as his Messengers and Embassadors, and for the Sake of those good Offices which they do to Men. But,

(4.) And above all, that Branch of Duty, which our using this Clause or Petition to God, *hallowed be thy Name*, doth most strongly enforce upon our Practice, is to be nicely careful never to do or speak any thing which is dishonourable to God. If we pray that God's Name may be hallowed, then we our selves, to be sure, ought not to prophane it ; by blaspheming God ; by denying any of his essential and glorious Attributes ; by carping at, and censuring the Administrations of his Providence ; by affirming any thing of him, or ascribing any thing to him, which is dishonourable, and apt to beget in the Minds, either of our selves or others, mean and unworthy, and disrespectful Thoughts of him ; by invoking him as a Witness, either to a Falshood or a trifling Matter ; *i. e.* by false, rash, or vain Swearing,

ing, or the like; for while we do by any of these, or the like Practices, dishonour God in our own Persons, we cannot use this Clause of the Lord's Prayer, and say, *hallowed be thy Name*, without the vilest Hypocrisy, and such as will render both our Persons and our Prayers odious and abominable to God; because our own Practice does most flatly contradict our Petition, which is a certain Argument that our Petition is not serious; for if we did desire heartily what we pray for, it is impossible that we should freely allow our selves to act or speak contrary to our own Desires. But,

2. Tho' our Care of hallowing God's Name must begin at home, it must not end there; for when we pray in the Lord's Prayer that God's Name may be hallowed, we pray that it may be hallowed not by our selves only, but by *all Men*; and whatever we pray for, we ought also our selves to endeavour after.

Now indeed we have not such Power over other Men, as to make them speak or

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do as we would have them; their Tongues are their own, and their Hands are their own, and they will say and do with them what they please themselves, and it is not in us to controul or restrain them. But nevertheless, tho' we can't of our selves, by our own Power, fully accomplish our own Desires in this Petition, we may contribute somewhat towards it; and tho' after all our Endeavours, and the utmost Expressions of our Zeal for God's Glory, it is to be feared that God will not be so much honoured and respected by all as he ought to be; he may yet, by means of our Endeavours to advance his Honour in the World, be more honoured and respected than otherwise he would be. Whether our Zeal for God will have the good Success we desire, we cannot tell, but however, the probable Hope that it will have some good Success, is a sufficient Encouragement to excite us to do all we can toward the fulfilling of our own Petition, that the Name of God may be hallowed; *i. e.* that God may be worshipped and reverenc'd as he ought to be, not by our selves

selves only, but by the whole Race of Mankind, and by all other Creatures which are capable of knowing, loving, and serving him.

And the proper Means to procure the Glory of God, or the particular Duties, which in Compliance with our own Petition, when we say, *hallowed be thy Name*, we are oblig'd to, in order to procure to God that Worship and Reverence from other Men, which is due to him, are such as these;

(1.) In order to this, 'tis our Duty to declare to others, upon all Occasions; the glorious Attributes, and the wonderful Works of God; according to the Direction and Example of the holy *Psal-mist*, Psal. xcvi. 3--9. *Declare his Glory among the Heathen, his Wonders among all People; for the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all Gods; for all the Gods of the Nations are Idols; but the Lord made the Heavens; Honour and Majesty are before him; Strength and Beauty are in*

*his Sanctuary. Give unto the Lord,  
O ye Kindreds of the People, give unto  
the Lord Glory and Strength; give unto  
the Lord the Glory due unto his Name;  
bring an Offering; and come into his  
Courts: O worship the Lord in the  
Beauty of Holiness; fear before him, all  
the Earth.*

(2.) In Order to this, it is likewise our Duty to stand up in Defence of God and Religion, against a loose, ungodly, and atheistical Generation of Men, by asserting the Righteousness and Equity of his Laws, and vindicating the Justice and Wisdom of his Providence.

And I believe the Practice of this Duty was never more seasonable and necessary than in this Age in which 'tis our Lot to be cast; for we live amongst those, who tho' baptized into the Christian Faith, and professing themselves Disciples of *Christ*, are yet bold enough to question not only some of the fundamental Articles of the Christian Belief, but the Foundation it self, the Authority and Credi-

Credibility of all divine Revelation, and who would fain reduce the World to that State of Darkness and Ignorance which it was in before the preaching of Christianity.

This therefore is a proper Time for us to contend earnestly for the *Faith which was once delivered to the Saints*, as St. Jude exhorts in the 3<sup>d</sup> ¶. of his Epistle; there being (as he adds in the next Words,) *certain Men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this Condemnation; ungodly Men, turning the Grace of our God into Lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.*

In Order therefore to be able to make Opposition to these Enemies of our Religion, it is our Duty to be diligent in the Reading and Study of the holy Scripture, which is *able to make us wise unto Salvation; which is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, and for Instruction in Righteousness, that the Man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good Works.*

And we should do well besides, as we have Opportunity and Ability, to study and to fix well in our Minds those Precepts and Arguments whereby the Truth of Christianity, and the divine Authority of the holy Scripture, have with good Success been maintained and asserted, in all Ages, by the Champions of Christianity, against all Opposers; that so being well rooted in Religion our selves, we may be the better able to convince Gainsayers; and, as the *Apostle* exhorts, *1 Pet. iii. 15.* *may be ready always to give an Answer to every Man that asketh us a Reason of the Hope that is in us.*

But this is not in every Man's Power; all have not Leisure or Parts to qualify themselves thus to assert and maintain the Honour of God, and the Truth of Religion, against Gainsayers. I add therefore, in the third and last Place,

(3.) Another Means of gaining Glory to God from others, which all Persons, even those of the meanest Capacities, may

may and ought to use for this Purpose ; and that is, the glorious Light of a good Example ; by which we may at once both instruct others in their Duty, and make them in Love with the Beauties of Virtue and Religion ; and so procure Glory to God by the Conversion and Salvation of Men ; according to that Precept and Direction of our *Saviour*, in *Matth.* v. 16. *Let your Light so shine before Men, that they may see your good Works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.*

For then God is best glorifyed, his Name is then most hallowed by Men, when they confess his Power, and Greatness, and Dominion, by submitting to his Laws, and setting themselves to please him in all things ; according to that of our *Saviour*, *John xv. 8. Herein is my Father glorifyed, that ye bear much Fruit* ; to the same Purpose is that of the *Apostle*, *Phil. i. 11. being filled with the Fruits of Righteousness, which are — unto the Glory and Praise of God.*

Thus have I shewn what it is to *hallow* the *Name of God*; what we desire when we repeat this Petition, *hallowed be thy Name*; and in what manner we ourselves ought to endeavour the Accomplishment of our own Desires.

*And to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be given by us and by all Men, not only with our Lips, but in our Lives, all Honour and Glory, now and for evermore. Amen.*



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KINGDOM Come,  
EXPLAINED.





## DISCOURSE IV.

*Thy Kingdom come, explained.*

MATTH. vi. 1Q.

*Thy Kingdom come; thy Will be done, in Earth as it is in Heaven.*



*Thy Kingdome come.* In the Lord's Prayer, as I have already observed, there are three principal Parts; the Preface, or Invocation; the Body of the Prayer; and the Conclusion.

And the Body of the Prayer consists of six Petitions; the three first of which respect chiefly God's Glory, and the three last our own Good.

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The three first, which respect chiefly God's Glory, are these, *hallowed be thy Name, thy Kingdom come, and thy Will be done in Earth as it is in Heaven.*

Of the first of which I discoursed the last time; I proceed now to the second, *thy Kingdom come.*

In speaking of which I shall observe the same Method as before; that is,

I. I shall explain the Meaning of it, or shew what Sense we ought to have in our Minds when we utter these Words in Prayer to God; what it is which we desire of God when we say, *thy Kingdom come.* And,

II. I shall shew what Duties we may learn, and are instructed in, by our Use of this Petition.

I. I shall explain the Meaning of it, or shew what Sense we ought to have in our Minds when we utter these Words in Prayer to God; what it is which we desire of God when we say, *thy Kingdom come.*

Now the Kingdom of God may be understood generally, or specially. Understanding it generally, by the Kingdom of God, is meant that sovereign Power and Dominion, which he, as the great Creator of all things, hath over all his Creatures; upholding all things by the Word of his Power, and directing and ordering, by his wise Providence, all the Affairs of the World, according to his own Pleasure; as 'tis said, *Psal. ciii. 19. The Lord hath prepared his Throne in the Heavens, and his Kingdom ruleth over all.*

But, understanding the Phrase thus, it cannot be a proper Subject of Petition to God, to pray that his Kingdom may come, because it is come already; for *he doth now according to his Will in the Army of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth, and none can stay his Hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?* as 'tis said, *Dan. iv. 35.* And this Kingdom of God is not lately begun, but was from all Eternity, and it will continue for ever; for as 'tis said in the y. just before, *his Dominion is an everlasting Dominion, and*

and his Kingdom is from Generation to Generation, Psal. cxlv. 13. And the Psalmist, speaking of this Kingdom of God, whereby with undoubted Right, and an infinite and uncontroulable Power, he governs and disposes all things according to his own Will, says, that *the Lord is King for ever and ever*, Psal. x. 16. and that *the Lord shall reign for ever*, Psal. cxlvii. 10. For this Kingdom of God being founded in his own infinite and eternal Perfections, as it never had beginning, so it never can have an end; neither is it capable of any Increase or Diminution.

To pray therefore that this Kingdom of God may come, would not be good Sense, for 'tis absurd to wish that a thing may be, which is already, and can never be otherwise than it is.

Besides, our very putting up our Petitions to him, as God, supposes that he is the Sovereign Lord of all; so that if this were the Sense of this Petition, the Ground of our Petition, and the Matter of it would be inconsistent; for if we pray that the Kingdom of God (taking it in this Sense,) may

*may come*, we seem to suppose that it is not come already; *i. e.* that he is not as yet so great a King as we wish he may be; and yet, by the very putting up this, or indeed any other Request to him, as God, we must be supposed to believe that he is God; *i. e.* that he is already the Sovereign Lord of the whole World, of infinite Fulness, Power and Perfection, able to grant us whatever we desire of him.

And lastly, when we put up this Prayer to God, called the Lord's Prayer, it is a thing which not only we must be suppos'd to believe, that his Kingdom is come, but which we also expressly own and profess our Belief of, both in the Preface of the Prayer, and in the Conclusion of it; in the Preface, when we style him, our Father *which is in Heaven*; and in the Conclusion, when we say, *for thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory, for ever and ever.* It is plain therefore that—

The coming, or the Existence of God's Kingdom, taken in this Sense, is not a proper Subject of Petition, but rather of Rejoicing and Gratulation, and Thanksgiving;

ving; according to those Passages which we meet with in the *Psalms*. *The Lord reigneth; let the Earth rejoice; let the Multitude of the Isles be glad thereof*, *Psal. xcvi. 1.* And again, *O come let us sing unto the Lord, let us make a joyful Noise to the Rock of our Salvation; let us come before his Presence with Thanksgiving, and make a joyful Noise unto him with Psalms; for the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all Gods*, *Psal. xcv. 1, 2, 3.* And again, *The Lord is great, and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all Gods*, *Psal. xcvi. 4.* *I know that the Lord is great, and that our Lord is above all Gods. Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he, in Heaven and Earth, in the Seas, and all deep Places*, *Psal. cxxxv. 5, 6.*

This Kingdom of God therefore being already come, or rather, having always been, and being what will be for ever; we are still to seek, what that Kingdom of God is which we pray may come, and which consequently we must suppose to be not come already, or at least not to be yet

yet settled and established in that Fullness and Perfection which we hope it will have.

And I observed before, that the Kingdom of God is sometimes taken specially ; i. e. not for that Power and Sovereignty which he by Right has over all, but for that free and voluntary Subjection which ought to be paid him by us, and all his other Creatures which he hath endued with Reason, and a Capacity to acknowledge his Sovereignty and Dominion.

And this Kingdom of God is twofold ; his Kingdom of Grace, and his Kingdom of Glory : the coming of both which we may well enough be understood to mean, when we put up this Petition of the Lord's Prayer, and say, *thy Kingdom come.*

i. By the Kingdom of God, in Scripture, is oftentimes meant his Kingdom of Grace ; or the Profession of the true Religion, and the Gospel of *Christ*, and a Practice correspondent thereto ; or, in other Words, by the Kingdom of God is meant the State of the Gospel, that Kingdom which God exercises peculiarly in his Church, instruct-

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ing it by his Word, guiding and governing it by his Spirit, and preserving and protecting it by his Power and Providence; which is therefore by *Divines* called God's *Kingdom of Grace*, because it is founded, not in God's absolute Power, but in a Covenant of Grace consented to by both Parties, by which the Subjects of this Kingdom engage to take him for their God, and he engages to take them for his People; and which is therefore call'd a Covenant of Grace, partly because it is mere Grace and Favour in God, that he is pleas'd to make any Engagement or Promise to Men; and partly, because the Conditions of this Covenant, on God's part, are very gracious, they are more advantagious to us than we could reasonably expect or desire: and because also the Conditions thereof on our Part are likewise very gracious, they are much easier and gentler than God might have required of us; and therefore the *Apostle*, speaking of *Christians*, the special Subjects of this spiritual Kingdom of God, says, *Rom. vi. 14.* *Ye are not under the Law,* (which required strict and unfinning

unsinning Obedience,) but under Grace; i. e. under such a Covenant as is gracious, and exacts less from you than God might have done, and makes Allowances for humane Weakness, and dispenses Pardon to repenting Sinners; and therefore St. John says, Ch. i. §. 17. *The Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ.*

And by the Kingdom of God, when it is taken in this Sense, may be meant either his external or his internal Kingdom. Or indeed I do not see why we may not at the same time understand both of them, when there is no Reason to restrain it only to one, as I think there is not in this Petition of the Lord's Prayer.

(1.) The external Kingdom of God is the outward Profession of the true Religion; in which Sense the State of the Jews, to whom the Law was given by Moses, and who for a time were the peculiar People of God, might then not improperly be called the Kingdom of God; the rest of the World being then overspread with

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Darkness and Ignorance, and serving Devils instead of God.

But now since the Abolition of that Law, and the Revelation of the Gospel, the Christian Religion, or the Preaching and Profession of the Gospel, is the Kingdom of God, or the Kingdom of Heaven; for both these Phrases are used in Scripture promiscuously: in this Sense this Phrase is used by St. John *Baptist*, Matth. iii. 2. *In those Days came John the Baptist, preaching in the Wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand. The Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand*; i. e. the Kingdom or Reign of the *Messiah* is now approaching; that Kingdom which God will exercise among Men, by the Preaching and Mediation of his Son. And thus likewise our *Saviour* uses the Phrase, in Matth. xxi. 43. where, having reproved the Incredulity of the *Jews*, for not receiving the Gospel which he preached, (under the Parable of an *Houſholder*, who ſent his Servants one after another, and laſt of all his Son, to the *Husbandmen*, to whom he had let out his *Vineyard*,

Vineyard, to receive the Fruits thereof, and they, as fast as they came, persecuted and slew them, not sparing even the Son himself;) our *Saviour* there threatens them, that as a Punishment of their base and barbarous Usage of the several Messengers which God had sent unto them; *the Kingdom of God should be taken from them*. *Therefore, I say unto you, the Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a Nation bringing forth the Fruits thereof.* *The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you*; i. e. since you have been so unfruitful under the Means of Grace, you shall now enjoy them no longer; God hath hitherto had his visible Church among you; *he hath shewed his Word unto Jacob, his Statutes and his Judgments unto Israel; he hath not dealt so with any Nation, and as for his Judgments they have not known them*, Psal. cxlvii. 19. But now he will remove his Kingdom, i. e. his visible Church, elsewhere; he will *call those his People that were not his People, and those beloved that were not beloved*; and you who

were once his chosen and peculiar People he will reject and cast off. This is plainly our Saviour's Meaning in that Passage, *the Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to another Nation*: 'tis as if he had said, You shall no longer enjoy the Profession of the true Religion, as you have hitherto done; but he will make known his Will and his Law to other People, who have been hitherto ignorant of him, and establish his Church among them.

Now if by the Kingdom of God, here in the Lord's Prayer, we understand this external Kingdom, or the visible Church of *Christ*, then our Meaning in this Petition, when we pray that God's Kingdom may come, is this; we desire of God that he would be pleased to enlarge the Bounds of his Church, that he would cause his Gospel to be preached, and the glorious Light thereof to shine among all Nations; we pray that all the dark Corners of the World may see the Salvation of God, that all *the Kingdoms of this World may become the Kingdoms of our Lord*, (Rev. ii. 15.) and

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of his *Christ*; and that all the People of the World, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, may be united in one Sheep-fold, under one Shepherd, the Lord *Jesus Christ*. But,

(2.) By the Kingdom of God, when we mean thereby the Kingdom of Grace, we may understand the internal and spiritual Kingdom of *Christ*; *i. e.* when *Christ* does not only rule in the World, by Mens outwardly professing his Religion, and calling themselves the Subjects of his Kingdom; but when he also reigns and rules in their Hearts; when all who confess his Name do sincerely give up themselves to obey his Laws, and do heartily endeavour to live as becomes the Gospel of *Christ*; when they are his Subjects, not only in Shew and Profession, but in Deed and in Truth; when they are *Christians* in Heart, as well as in Name, and sincerely practise the Religion which they profess.

And in this Sense our *Saviour* himself uses, or rather interprets this Phrase, *the Kingdom of God*; (*Luke xvii. 20, 21.*) when being demanded by the *Pharisees*

when the Kingdom of God should come? (which they understood in a carnal Sense, meaning, by the Kingdom of God, a temporal Kingdom upon Earth, which they thought God did intend in a short time to establish; making the *Jews*, under their King the *Messiah*, the Head of an universal Monarchy;) he answered them, and said, *the Kingdom of God cometh not with Observation; neither shall they say, lo here, or lo there; for behold the Kingdom of God is within you; i. e. that is truly the Kingdom of God, when God reigns and rules in the Hearts of Men, and they do inwardly, and from the Heart, yield themselves sincerely obedient to him.* And the same thing is plainly meant by the Kingdom of God, *Rom. xiv. 17. The Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink, but Righteousness and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost.*

Now if by the Kingdom of God, here in the Lord's Prayer, which we desire may come, we understand this internal and spiritual Kingdom of *Christ*, whereby he rules in the Hearts of Men, subduing their

their Wills to the Obedience of Faith; then what we desire of God, when we utter the Words of this Petition, is this; that he would be pleased to grant such a Measure of his Grace to all Men, and especially to all those who do profess his true Religion, that they may all live answerably to their Profession; that all who are Members of the visible Church or Kingdom of *Christ*, may be likewise Members of his spiritual Kingdom, may entirely submit themselves to him in all things, and obey from the Heart all the Laws of his holy Institution: or, in the Words sometime used in our Liturgy, that the *whole Church of Christ may be so guided and governed by his good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians, may be led into the way of Truth, and hold the Faith in Unity of Spirit, in the Bond of Peace, and in Righteousness of Life.*

Thus we are to pray for the coming of God's Kingdom of Grace; *i.e.* that all the World may be brought both to the Profession and Practice of the true Religion; that the

the Gospel of *Christ* may be preached to the whole World; and that all who hear it may heartily receive and embrace it, and lead their Lives according to it; that they may all be, both in Profession and in Truth, the Disciples of *Christ*. But,

2. As God hath a Kingdom of Grace, so he hath likewise a Kingdom of Glory; and tho' the former be (as I suppose) what was principally meant in this Petition of the Lord's Prayer, wherein we pray that his Kingdom may come; yet I see no Reason why we may not understand the Words in so large a Sense as to comprehend this other too.

Now God's Kingdom of Glory is at the end of the World, when he shall come in Judgment to reward the Obedience of his faithful Servants; and *in flaming Fire*, to take *Vengeance on them that knew not God, and obeyed not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*; when all the Kingdoms of the World shall become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his *Christ*, and he shall reign for ever; as 'tis said in *Rev.*

xi. 15. Nay, when the Son also himself shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, and shall be subject unto him that before did put all things under him, that God may be all in all; as 'tis said, *1 Cor. xv. 24, 28.*

But now taking the Kingdom of God, in this Sense, for his Kingdom of Glory; when we pray for the coming of this Kingdom of God, we cannot put up the Petition in this Sense, absolutely, but in Subordination to the other Sense of it. For to pray absolutely that God would put an end to this State of things, that he would cut the Years of this World short, and hasten the Day of his Vengeance, is in Effect to pray for the Destruction of Sinners; and such a Petition as this, cannot be put up to God without Breach of Charity towards Men, whose Salvation we ought to desire, and consequently should be glad of God's Long-suffering towards them, which we hope will bring them to Repentance. And therefore we are first to pray for the coming of God's Kingdom of Grace, and then for the coming of his Kingdom

Kingdom of Glory; we are first to pray that the Gospel may be preached to, and heartily receiv'd by all; and then, when the Number of the Elect is filled up, we may pray that his Kingdom of Glory may also come; that is, that blessed time, when they who are dead in the Lord shall receive the Reward of their Labours; when the Promises of God shall be made good to all his faithful Servants; when they who suffered for him here, shall reign with him in his eternal Glory; when the Glory of his Majesty, and the Wisdom of his Providence, and the Riches of his Love, and the Exactness of his Justice, shall be made manifest to all the World; when the Devil shall be for ever bound in the infernal Lake, and Sin, and Death, and all our spiritual Enemies, shall be perfectly subdued, and utterly destroyed; when we shall be made Kings and Priests unto God, and live for ever with him in the happy Regions of unspeakable Felicity. And this is what we ought to pray for, and earnestly to desire; for 'tis given as part of the Character of a good Christian,

in the holy Scripture, that he *waits for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*, 1 Cor. i. 7. that he *looks for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ from Heaven*, Phil. iii. 20. that he *loves his appearing*, 2 Tim. iv. 8. that he *looks for the blessed Hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ*, Tit. ii. 13.

In short then; when we use this Passage in the Lord's Prayer, *thy Kingdom come*, this is the Sense which we ought to have in our Minds: “ May'st thou, O God, “ who art indeed the King over all the “ World, may'st thou be owned as King “ by all; may all Mankind profess Sub- “ jection to thee; and may thy Grace so “ rule in the Hearts of all, that they may “ be entirely subject to thee, and sincere- “ ly obey thee; and then may that bles- “ sed time also hasten, when all who have “ here owned thee for their King, shall “ reign for ever with thee in thy everlast- “ ing Glory.” *Thy Kingdom come.*

And now having sufficiently explained this Petition, and shewn what Sense we ought

ought to have in our Minds, when we utter these Words in Prayer to God; I proceed, (according to the Method before laid down,)

II. To shew what Duties we may learn, and be instructed in, and are oblig'd to, by our Use of this Petition; *thy Kingdom come*; and they are chiefly these which follow.

I. As we pray that God's Kingdom may come, *i. e.* that the Bounds of the *Christian* Church may be enlarged; we ought by all the ways we can, to endeavour the Accomplishment of our own Petition; for he who prays for that which he will be at no Pains to compass, may well be presumed not to desire what he prays for.

In Compliance therefore with our own Petition, when we say, *thy Kingdom come*, we ought to use all the Means which are in our Power, to increase and propagate the *Christian* Faith, and to make Proselytes to it.

It was therefore a Duty specially incumbent on the *Apostles* and immediate Disciples of our Lord, to whom the Use of this Prayer was first commanded, to be faithful and diligent in the Execution of that Commission which was given them by our Lord, just before his Ascension, to *go into all the World, and to preach the Gospel to every Creature*, Mark xvi. 15. and to *disciple all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them*, Matth. xxviii. 19, 20. And,

'Tis still, in order to the same End, the Duty of all Ministers of the Gospel, according to the Direction given by St. Paul to *Timothy*, to *preach the Word, to be instant in Season and out of Season, to reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with all Long-suffering and Doctrine*, 2 Tim. iv. 2.

And lastly, it was always, and ever will be the Duty of all *Christians*, in order to enlarge this Kingdom of God and of Christ, to let their *Light so shine before Men, that others seeing their good Works, may glorify*

*glorify their Father which is in Heaven,*  
according to the Direction of our *Saviour*, in *Matth. v. 16.*

'Tis indeed a thing utterly inconsistent with Sincerity, in putting up this Petition to God, *that his Kingdom may come*, for any of us, who make this a part of our Prayer, to allow our selves in any scandalous Practices, whereby the Minds of those who are Aliens to our holy Religion may be justly prejudiced against it, whereby the Enemies of God may be made to blaspheme, and by Reason whereof our excellent Religion will be in Danger to be evil spoken of among the Heathens.

And on the other side, it is our indispensable Duty to endeavour to recommend our most holy Profession to the Judgment and Esteem of Mankind, by a Conversation becomming the Gospel of *Christ*, by a blameless and an exemplary Life; and by this Argument, Persons of all Orders and Degrees are frequently in holy Scripture exhorted to great Strictness and Regularity in their Behaviour. The *aged Women* are to be in Behaviour as becom-  
eth

eth Holiness, — that they may teach the younger Women to be sober, to love their Husbands, to love their Children; to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own Husbands; and all this to the End that the Word of God be not blasphemed, Tit. ii. 3, &c. Nay, even Servants (Persons of the meanest Rank, whose Conversation may be thought to be least regarded, whose Misbehaviour may be thought the least scandalous; even Servants, I say,) are to behave themselves orderly and honestly in their Stations, to count their own Masters worthy of all Honour, and that to this End, that the Name of God and his Doctrine be not blasphemed, 1 Tim. vi. 1. they are to be obedient unto their own Masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again, not purloining, but shewing all good Fidelity; and that to this Purpose, that they may adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, Tit. ii. 9, &c. And 'tis the Duty of all Christians whatsoever, as we are taught by St. Peter, 1 Epist. iii. 15, 16.

*to sanctify the Lord God in their Hearts, —and to keep a good Conscience; that they that speak Evil of them as Evil-Doers, may be ashamed, when it shall appear that they do falsely accuse their good Conversation in Christ: 'tis the Duty of all Christians, to have their Conversation honest among the Gentiles, that even those who speak against them as Evil-Doers, may, by their good Works which they shall behold, glorify God; as we are taught by the same Apostle, in the second Chapter of that Epistle, at the 12<sup>th</sup> ¶.*

It was this, I mean the holy and blameless, and exemplary Lives of the Apostles, and first Converts to Christianity, which was in great Measure the Cause of its spreading so fast as it did at first; and without this, all the Zeal of the Apostles in preaching the Gospel, and all the Miracles whereby their Preaching and Testimony was confirmed would have avail'd but little.

For Men may be zealous in a bad Cause as well as in a good one; for thus the *Pharisees did compass Sea and Land to make one Proselyte*, only to make him two-fold *more*

the *Child of Hell* than themselves; as our *Saviour* observes, *Matth. xxiii. 15.* And Miracles may be, and have been wrought for the Confirmation of a false Worship, as is intimated both by *Moses, Deut. xiii. 1,2.* and by our *Saviour, Matth. xxiv. 24.* So that whether any Religion be from God, cannot be certainly known by the Zeal of Men to promote it, or by the seeming Wonders which are wrought to confirm the Truth of it: but if the Cause which Men are zealous for, be apparently good, and the Doctrine for the Confirmation whereof Miracles are wrought, be such as plainly tends to purify Men's Hearts, and to reform their Lives; and if it be evident that all who embrace it are render'd better Men by it; there can then be no reasonable Suspicion of any worldly Design in the Promoters of such a Religion, or of any diabolical Illusion in the working of such Miracles: but as the Miracles do bear Witness to the Truth of the Doctrine, so the Purity of the Religion does no less bear Witness to the Truth of the Miracles; and both together are such an

Attestation to the Truth and Divinity of the Religion, as cannot reasonably be excepted against.

And by the same Means by which this Kingdom of God in his Church was at first set up, by the same (so far as they are in our Power,) must it be upheld and maintain'd; Ifay, so far as they are in our Power; and therefore it having seemed good to the divine Wisdom, after that the *Christian* Religion had been once well proved by Miracles, and the History thereof had been once published, and generally receiv'd in the World, to withdraw the extraordinary Power of Miracles, as being no longer needful; the only Means whereby we can now contribute towards the upholding and establishing this Kingdom of God in the World, is by Zeal in maintaining the Truth of our Religion, against vain Disputers; and especially by a remarkable Strictness and Sanctity of Life. And this most certainly will be an effectual Means to make our Religion be spread and propagated in the World, if by the Holiness and Exemplariness of our Lives, we can make it appear

that the Religion which we profess is more excellent than any other. Thus, as we pray that the Kingdom of God may come, *i. e.* that his true Worship and Religion may be propagated in the World, and that all Nations of the Earth may come into the Bosom of the Church, we are to endeavour the same by *shining as Lights in the World*; and by proving to all, the Excellency of our holy Religion, by the Purity and Excellency of our own Lives, led exactly according to the strict and perfect Precepts thereof. But,

2. As we pray that God's Kingdom may come, *viz.* that Kingdom of God which is within us; *i. e.* that God may rule in the Hearts of all those who do confess him with their Mouths; it is our Duty, and what in Compliance and Conformity to our own Petition we ought to do, to give him our own Hearts, to yield our selves, without any Reserve, to believe whatever he has revealed, and to do whatsoever he has enjoined.

For the chief Enemies to this Kingdom of God within us, and which hinder it from being established; I say, the chief Enemies to this Kingdom of God are likewise within us; they are the naughty Desires and Inclinations of our own Hearts; the *natural Man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God*, —— because they are spiritually discerned; the carnal Mind, is *Enmity against God*, for it is not subject to the *Law of God*, neither indeed can be. These Enemies, therefore, of God's Kingdom, it is our part to fight against, thereby to promote, as much as in us lies, the Accomplishment of our own Petition. And 'tis not enough for us, in this Case, to pray that God's Kingdom may come, to implore his Grace to sanctify us, and redeem us from our Sins and Corruptions; but we must work together with it, and set our selves as strenuously to mortify all our carnal Affections, and corrupt Inclinations, as if we had no Help but from our selves: and then thus praying, and thus endeavouring, thus procuring by our Prayer God's Grace to work

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in us, and thus working our selves together with the divine Grace, both our Endeavours will be successful, and our Prayers also availing, and the Kingdom of God will come; it will be set up and established within our Hearts: for, as the *Apostle* says, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. *The Weapons of our Warfare are not carnal, but mighty thro' God, to the pulling down of Strong-holds, casting down Imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it self against the Knowledge of God, and bringing into Captivity every Thought to the Obedience of Christ.*

3. Lastly; when we say *thy Kingdom come*, we mean thereby not only God's Kingdom of Grace, but likewise his Kingdom of Glory; we pray not only that the Bounds of his Church may be enlarged, that he may have the *Heathen for his Inheritance*, and the *utmost Parts of the Earth for his Possession*, and that he may reign and rule in the Hearts of all those who profess Subjection to him; but we pray likewise, (as 'tis express'd in one of

the Collects of our Church, appointed to be used at the Burial of the Dead; we pray, I say,) that having *accomplished the Number of his Elect*, he would also *hasten his Kingdom*; that so we, with all those that are departed in the true *Faith of his holy Name*, may have our perfect *Consummation and Bliss*, both in *Body and Soul*, in his eternal and everlasting *Glory*.

And when we pray that God's Kingdom of Glory may come, the Duty which the Petition, taken in this Sense, instructs us in, and enforces upon our Practice, is to be diligent in preparing our selves for this Kingdom of God; that so, when our Lord comes to take upon him this Kingdom, we may be provided to receive him, and in a fit Condition to enter with him into it. *Seeing that ye look for such things*, (saith St. Peter, 2 Pet. iii. 14. when he had been speaking of the coming of this great *Day of God*, *wherein the Heavens shall pass away with a great Noise*, and *the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat*; *the Earth also*, and *the Works that*

that are therein, shall be burnt up, and we, according to his Promise, look for a new Heaven and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness, seeing, says he, that ye look for such things; and I think it may be said much rather, *seeing that ye pray for such things*, and are endeavouring by your own Petitions to hasten the coming of this great Day of God;) be diligent, that when he comes, ye may be found of him in Peace, without Spot, and blameless. They who live here without any Sense of Religion, may plead, when that Day shall come upon them, that they were surprized by a Judgment which they looked not for; but we who pray, every Day, that God's Kingdom may come, shall not be able so much as to pretend that we were not aware of its coming; and so shall be of all others the most inexcusable, if we are not prepared for it.

Let then our *Loins be always girded about*, and our *Lights always burning*, and we *our selves like unto Men that wait for their Lord, that when he cometh and knocketh, we may open unto him immediately*,

ately, Luke xiii. 35, &c. This is the good Lesson we are reminded of, every time we repeat this Petition; and *blessed are those Servants, whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching*, v. 37.

If we are always in this Posture, we may say this part of our Lord's Prayer with true Devotion, and with an earnest Longing and Desire of the Accomplishment of our own Wishes; and then, when we see this Day a coming, we may *lift up our Heads with Joy, knowing that our Redemption draweth nigh*, Luke xxi. 28. But to them who live in Wickedness and Uncleanness, or in Riot and Excess, beating their Fellow-Servants, and eating and drinking with the Drunken; the Day of the Lord, without their wishing, will come too soon; *the Lord of such Servants will come in a Day when they look not for him, and in an Hour that they are not aware of, and will cut them asunder, and appoint them their Portion with Hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth*, Matth. xxiv. 50. And to such as these, who live without a true and

and serious Sense of God and Religion, and yet, for Form and Custom-sake, pray with the Church, and say every Day, *thy Kingdom come*, the Prophet *Amos* gives a very just and seasonable Reproof; *Amos* v. 18, &c. *Wo unto you that desire the Day of the Lord; to what End is it for you? The Day of the Lord is Darkness, and not Light; as if a Man did flee from a Lyon, and a Bear met him; or went into the House, and leaned his Hand on the Wall, and a Serpent bit him. Shall not the Day of the Lord be Darkness, and not Light? Even very dark, and no Brightness in it?* I conclude all therefore with these Words of the *Apostle*, Rom. xiii. 12, &c. *The Night is far spent, the Day is at Hand*, (that great Day of the Lord, when we must give an Account of all our Works, it is at hand, it is very near approaching;) *let us therefore cast off the Works of Darkness, and let us put on the Armour of Light. Let us walk honestly, as in the Day, not in Rioting and Drunkenness, not in Chambering*

*bering and Wantonness, not in Strife  
and Envying; but put ye on the Lord  
Jesus Christ, and make not Provi-  
sion for the Flesh, to fulfil the Lusts  
thereof.*

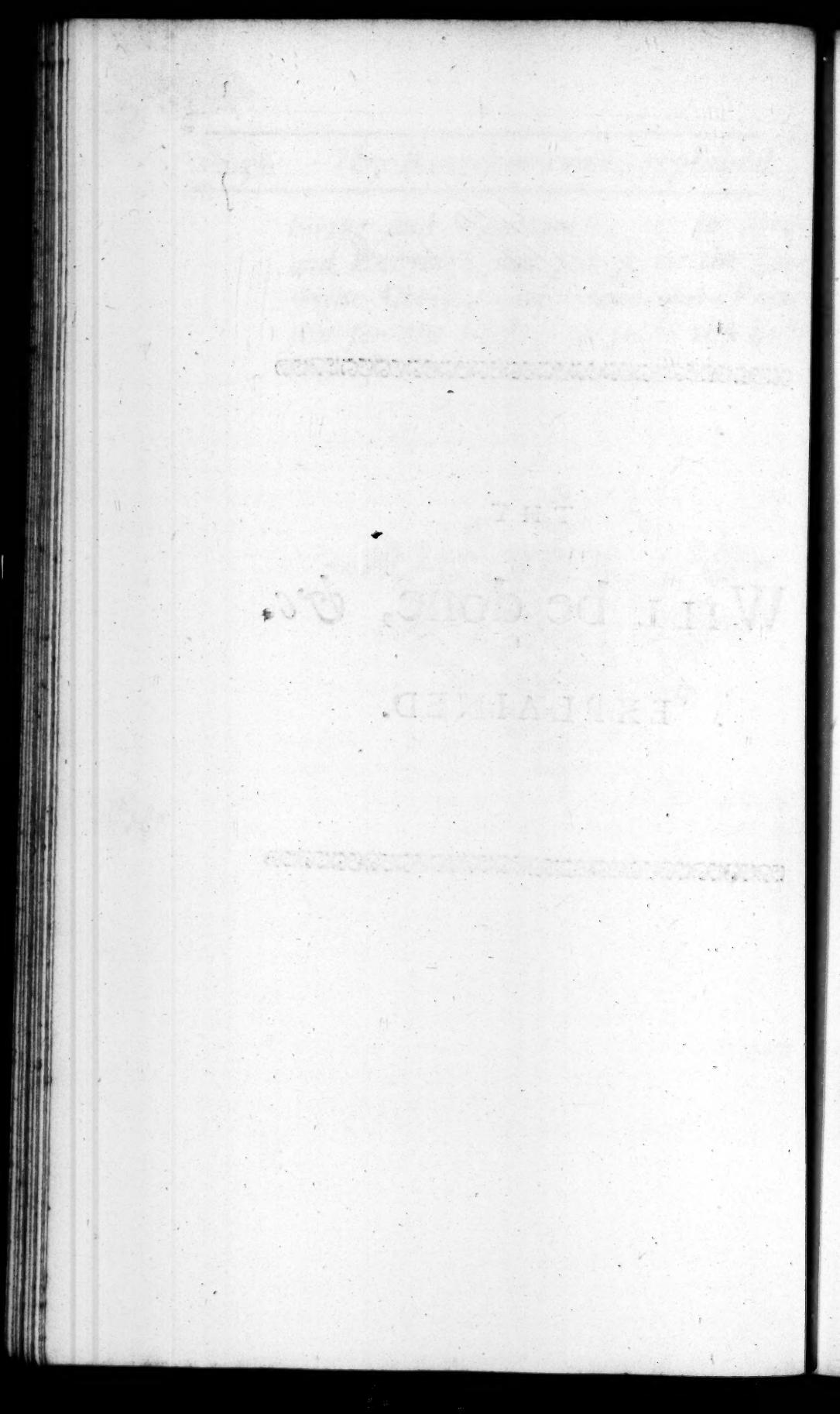


THY

THY

WILL be done, &c.

EXPLAINED.





## DISCOURSE V.

*Thy Will be done, &c. explained.*



MATTH. vi. 10.

—*Thy Will be done, in Earth as  
it is in Heaven.*



HE Prayer taught here by our Saviour to his Disciples, consists (as I have formerly noted) of three principal Parts; I. A Preface, containing a solemn Invocation of Almighty God, *Our Father which art in Heaven*: II. The Body of the Prayer, consisting of six distinct Petitions: and III. The Conclusion of it; containing, I. A Doxology, or solemn Recognition

of

of the Greatness and Majesty of God, *thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory, for ever and ever;* and, 2. A Profession of our hearty Assent to every Clause of the foregoing Prayer, and of our Faith and Trust in God, in the Word, *Amen.*

And the first part of this Prayer, *viz.* the Preface, containing (as I said,) a solemn Invocation of Almighty God, whom we are taught to call, *Our Father which is in Heaven,* I have formerly discoursed of; shewing the Meaning thereof, and what Duties it instructs us in, and obliges us to.

I have likewise already entred upon the second Part, *viz.* the Body of the Prayer, consisting (as I told you,) of six several Petitions, three of them chiefly regarding God's Glory, and the other three of them chiefly respecting our own Good.

And the two first of these, *hallowed be thy Name, and thy Kingdom come,* I have likewise already discoursed of. In speaking of both which, I have shewed you, first, what we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter these Words in Prayer to God;

God; and secondly, what Duties we may learn, and are instructed in, by our Use of these Petitions.

I proceed now to discourse of the third Petition, in the same Method; *thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven.*

I. Then, I am to declare the Meaning of these Words, or to shew what Sense we ought to have in our Minds, when we repeat this Clause or Petition of the Lord's Prayer; *thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven.*

Now the *Will* of God is two-fold; the *Will* of his *Counsel* or *Providence*, and the *Will* of his *Precepts* or *Commands*; both which we pray, in this Petition, may be done.

1. By that *Will* of God, which we pray may be done, we may understand the *Will* of his *Counsel* or *Providence*; i. e. that *Will* of God, by which he orders and disposes every thing in the World, as it pleases him, *working all things according to the Counsel of his own Will*, Eph. i. 11.

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And thus, whatever falls out in the World is the Will of God, and there is no Event which comes to pass, no Accident which happens, but what is agreeable to God's Will, and is brought to pass by the Ordering and Disposition, by the Operation or Permission of his Providence; for *he doth according to his Will in the Army of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth, and none can stay his Hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?* as 'tis said, *Dan. iv. 30.* And *whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in Heaven, and in Earth, and in the Seas, and in all deep Places,* says the *Psalmist, Psal. cxxxv. 6.*

But now, if it be so, that God does always order every thing according to his own Pleasure; if, as the *wise Man* says, *Prov. xix. 21.* *Whatever Devices there are in the Heart of Man, the Counsel of the Lord, that shall stand.* If, whatever Opposition be made to him, he will yet bring to pass whatever he purposes, what need we then make this the Subject of our Petition? We need not surely pray for that, which will certainly be whether we

pray

pray for it or no ; if therefore what God wills be always done, what need we pray that *his Will may be done ? For who hath resisted his Will*, as the *Apostle* speaks ? *Rom. ix. 19.* And, *the Lord of Hosts hath purposed*, saith the Prophet, *and who shall disannul it ? And his Hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back ?* *Isaiah xiv. 27.*

I answer ; if we understand this by *the Will of God*, in this Petition of the Lord's Prayer, *viz.* the Execution of his Purpose and Counsel, then when we pray, that his Will may be done, we do not mean that it may be done by himself, but that it may be done us; *i. e.* we do not pray that God may do what *he* pleases, but that what pleases God, and what he does according to his own Pleasure, may please us too. When we pray that God's Will may be done, (meaning thereby the Will of his Counsel, or Providence,) our Wish and Desire is, that we our selves, and all Men may perfectly acquiesce in, and be fully satisfyed with whatsoever God shall please to order for us ; for then we do this

Will of God, when we patiently suffer it, and in all the Accidents which befall us, whether they be pleasing or ungrateful, prosperous or adverse, can heartily join in that Saying of good old *Eli*, 1 Sam. iii. 18. *It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good.*

Or else, taking *the Will of God* still in this Sense, for the *Will of his Counsel or Providence*; I think this Clause in the Lord's Prayer, *thy Will be done*, may be yet better understood, as an *Act of Submission and Resignation* to the Will of God, rather, I say, than as a Wish or Petition. Thus the Phrase is used in *Acts* xxi. 14, where, after the *Christians* who were with *St. Paul* had in vain endeavour'd to persuade him not to go up to *Jerusalem*, because that *there* (as it had been foretold by *Agabus*,) *Bonds and Afflictions did abide him*, it is said by *St. Luke*, and when *he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, the Will of the Lord be done;* i. e. "If it must be so, if it be the Will of " God that thou should'st go up to *Jerusalem*, and suffer there those things which

" have been foretold, so be it, we are  
" contented, we submit to this Will of  
" God, we acquiesce in his good Plea-  
" sure, we are satisfyed that it should  
" be as it pleases him." And in the same  
Sense our *Saviour* himself used this very  
same Phrase, in Prayer to God, when he  
was in his Agony in the Garden, the Even-  
ing before his Crucifixion, *Matth. xxvi. 42.*  
*He prayed, saying, O my Father, if this*  
*Cup may not pass away from me, except I*  
*drink it, thy Will be done; i. e. I submit;*  
I am content to do it; I resign my self  
wholly to thy Pleasure, to suffer whatever  
thou shalt think fit to lay upon me. For  
that this was our *Saviour's* Meaning in  
those Words, *thy Will be done*, appears  
plainly from the 39<sup>th</sup> ¶. of that Chapter,  
where the same Prayer of our Lord is thus  
related; *O my Father, if it be possible, let*  
*this Cup pass from me; nevertheless, not*  
*as I will, but as thou wilt;* where these  
last Words, nevertheless not as I will, but  
as thou wilt, are manifestly an *Act*, or  
an *Expression* of his *Resignation* of him-  
self to God's Will and Pleasure, and is thus

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expressed by St. Luke, *Nevertheless not my Will, but thine be done*, Luke xxii. 42.

When therefore we say the same Words in the Lord's Prayer, *thy Will be done*, it is very proper for us at all times, but then especially when we are under any Affliction, or have a Prospect of some sore Evil like to befall us, to use them in the same Sense in which our Lord then did; *i.e.* to compose our selves thereby to a patient Suffering of the Will of God, to mean them as an Act of Resignation of our selves to his good Pleasure. But,

2. There is another Branch of God's Will, which I called before the Will of his Precepts or Commands; that is, that Will of his which he has declared to us, which he has given us as a Rule to walk by; for what God has enjoin'd us, that is his *Will* we should do. Thus our *Saviour* says of himself, *Job. vi. 38. Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out; for I came down from Heaven, not to do my own Will, but the Will of him that sent me; and this is the Father's Will*

Will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing. And this (we are told by the Apostle,) is the Will of God, even our Sanctification, 1 Thess. iv. 3. And 'tis this Will of God which I take to be chiefly meant in this Petition, and which we pray may be done.

And understanding the Will of God, in this Sense, there are two things which we pray for in this Petition, both in the Behalf our selves, and in the Behalf of others.

(1.) We pray that God would be pleased to make known his Will to us and to all Men, that we may not be *unwise*, but *understanding what the Will of the Lord is*, as the Apostle speaks, Eph. v. 17. That we may *prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect Will of God*, as 'tis said, Rom. xii. 2. Because unless we know what the Will of God is, and what things he would have us do, we shall not know how to set our selves to the Performance thereof.

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(2.) We

(2.) We pray also, that having made known his Laws to us, he would be pleased to give us his Grace obediently to keep the same; for then this Will of God is done by us, when we do what he commands us; when we obey all his Precepts, and when we order all our Conversation aright, and according to the Rules and Directions which he has prescribed. And therefore, that we our selves, and all other Men, may always do thus, is what we are to be understood to mean, when we pray that *his Will may be done in Earth.*

But it follows in the Prayer, *as it is in Heaven; thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven; i. e.* May thy Will be done and performed by us Men, who live now here upon the Earth, as it is by thy holy Angels which are in Heaven; of whom the holy *Psalmist* says, *Psal. ciii. 20, 21.* that *they do his Commands, hearkening unto the Voice of his Word, and that they are the Ministers of God, that do his Pleasure.*

But

But there are some special Conditions, or Qualifications, of the Obedience of the holy Angels to the Will of God, which help to render it more grateful to him, and better accepted by him, than otherwise it would be: these therefore we pray, in this Petition, may be imitated by Men on Earth, in their doing the Will of God, when we pray that his Will may be done in Earth, *as it is in Heaven.*

And this I take to be the Meaning of the Word *as*; *as it is in Heaven.* This *as* denotes a *Likeness* only, not an *Equality*; for we can't be suppos'd to pray that the Will of God may be done as perfectly by Men as it is by Angels; that the Obedience of Men, in this mortal and sinful State, should be as spotless and untainted as that of the holy Spirits in Heaven is: for such Obedience as they yield to the Will of God, is so much beyond what we are able to yield, while we are here in the Body; that we can hardly pray with Faith, that ours may be exactly such, that it may be in no Respect inferior to theirs: but ours may be as good as it can be in this  
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frail and degenerate State; our Obedience may be like theirs, tho' not *equal* to it; ours may be, tho' not *so perfect*, yet *so qualified* and *conditioned* as theirs is; and that such, it may be, we desire of God in this Petition. Particularly,

1st. As in Heaven there are *no rebellious Spirits* mixt with the holy Angels, (for the Angels which kept not their first Estate, have also left their own Habitation, and are reserved in everlasting Chains, under Darkness, unto the Judgment of the great Day, as St. Jude tells us, in the 6<sup>th</sup> ¶. of his Epistle;) so that there are now none in Heaven, who gainsay or oppose the divine Pleasure;) so we pray that it may be on Earth; *i. e.* that the *whole Race of Men* may be a willing and obedient People; that all Vice and Wickedness may be abolished, and rooted out of the Earth; that those Days may come which have been foretold long ago by the Prophets, when *they shall not teach every Man his Neighbour, and every Man his Brother, saying, know the Lord, for all shall*

*shall know me, from the least unto the greatest, Jer. xxxi. 34. For the Earth shall be full of the Knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea, Isaiah xi. 9.*

*2dly.* Whatever the holy Angels do, in Obedience to the Commands of God, they do it *with a good Will*; they not only do what they are commanded, but they are pleased with the Command; they obey cheerfully, and from the Heart, without any Reluctancy, without any Spice of Unwillingness, or the least Degree of Aversion to the Busineſs they are employ'd about: they not only do the Will of God, but they delight to do it; they undertake their Work, not as a Task, but as a Pleaſure: and therefore that we, and all the Inhabitants of the Earth may do ſo too, is another thing which we desire of God in this Petition.

*3dly.* As a Fruit of this Heartineſs in their Obedience, whatever they are commanded they *undertake* readily; they need not be often urged, or frequently called upon

upon to do this Work ; but the least Intimation of God's Pleasure presently sets them to it. That we therefore may do so too, that we may obey readily, and without Delay take in Hand the Work which God has given us to do, is another thing which we beg of God in this Petition.

4thly. As they readily undertake, so they likewise *speedily execute* whatever they are commanded ; they are the winged Messengers of God, and when they are sent they run ; when they are bid to go, they fly ; they set about their Work so quickly, and dispatch it so nimbly, that the Space of Time between God's giving his Command, and their executing it, is hardly perceptible. Thus when *Cornelius* prayed, and an Angel was sent unto him by God, to tell him that his Prayers were heard, and his Alms accepted, and to order him to send for St. *Peter* to be instructed by him in the Christian Religion ; all this was done, the Message was both sent from God, and delivered to him by the Angel,

Angel, before he had ended his Prayer; as you may see, *Acts x. 30.* That we therefore may so *run the Way of God's Commandments*, and with the like Speed and Diligence finish the Work which is given us to do, is what we farther desire of God in this Petition, when we say, *thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven.*

5thly, And lastly; as the Obedience of the holy Angels is hearty and chearful, prompt and speedy, so it is likewise universal. They never decline any Work which they are set to; whatever it is that they are forbidden to do, it is all alike to them; they make no Difference, but as readily undertake one thing as another; they have no Will of their own, distinct from, and much less opposite to, the Will of God; but what God wills, they will too; and immediately set themselves to execute his Commands.

Thus is God's Will done in Heaven by the holy Angels, and thus we pray that it may be done in Earth by our selves, and by all Men, when we use this Passage of

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the Lord's Prayer. So that the full Sense of this Petition, (understanding by the Will of God, both *the Will of his Providence, and the Will of his Precepts*;) and the Meaning which we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter these Words, is this; “*Righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are all thy Judgments, and the Testimonies that thou hast commanded are also righteous, and very faithful;* “*may we, therefore, and all Men, always meekly submit our selves to thy Dispōsal;* “*may we always be well content and satisfied with that Lot and Portion which thou assignest to us; and whatever Commands thou art at any time pleased to lay upon us, may they universally be submitted to, by all; and grant that we may perform them, with such Heartiness and good Will, with such Readiness and Cheerfulness, with such Speed and Impartiality, as the holy Angels in Heaven do.*”

And now, having explain'd the Meaning of this Petition, I proceed, as I propos'd in the second Place,

II. To

II. To shew what good Lessons we are taught, what Duties we are instructed in, and engag'd to, by our Use of this Petition, *thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven.* And,

1. Taking the Will of God, in the first Sense, for the Will of his Counsel or Providence; the Duty we are instructed in, and reminded of by our Use of this Petition, is to submit our selves entirely to God's Will; to be contented with our Lot; to like well that Place and Station which the Providence of God assigns us; and to be easy and patient under all the Calamities and Afflictions which befall us in this Life; whatsoever pleases God, should please us too; and we should always rest satisfyed, that what he orders for us is best. And we contradict our selves, and act inconsistently with our own Petition, if, while we pray that God's Will may be done, we fret and murmur at any of the Dispensations of his Providence towards us, or cavil at, and find Fault with, his ordering

ordering and Administration of things; for he worketh *all things according to the Counsel of his own Will*, as the *Apostle* says; and what is according to God's Will, is likewise according to our own Desire; for we pray that *his Will may be done*; what Reason then can we have to complain, when things fall out according to our own Wishes? And unless the Event of things, which is always according to the Will of God, be likewise pleasing to us, we are guilty of foul Dissimulation and Hypocrisy with God, when we pray that *his Will may be done*.

And there is Reason good, that we shou'd be of this quiet, composed, and contented Spirit; there is sufficient Reason implied even in the Petition it self, to oblige us to be always thus easy and satisfyed with the divine Administrations; for the Will which we desire may be done, or which we declare our Acquiescence in, is God's; *thy Will be done*.

And he is a Being of infinite Wisdom; he knows before-hand what will be the Issue and Event of all his Administrations; and

and he understands exactly what is best for the World, and for every particular Man in it; and is able so to contrive and order things, that what seems evil and adverse, shall work for good at the last: whereas on the contrary, we understand very little of the Nature and Tendency of things, or indeed even of our own Tempers and Constitutions. We neither know what is best in it self, nor what is best for us; we oftentimes wish for our selves those things, which if we had them would be our Ruin; and are sometimes sensible afterwards of the Kindness, as well as of the Wisdom of God, in denying us those things which we (perhaps with too much Urgency and Importunity;) did request of him. And we as little know what is bad for us; we are apt to fret and complain when ever any thing cross or adverse happens to us, and yet afterwards we often see Reason to say with the *Psalmist*, *It is good for us that we have been in Trouble*. Seeing therefore that God knows always both what is best, and how best to bring

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it about, it is very reasonable for us to submit to his Will; especially,

Seeing he is as *good* and *gracious* as he is wise; all his Thoughts towards us are kind, and he designs our Good by all the Dispensations of his Providence: considering which, we may be always well assured, that whatever he chuses and orders for us, tho' it be not to our present liking, is more for our Good than any thing we could have chosen for our selves. So that we may with good Reason live more at Ease, freer from Care and Fear, under the Care and Protection of his good Providence, than we could do, if we might have our own Wishes and Desires in every thing; and we do indeed wish the best which we can for our selves, when we say, *not our Will, but thine be done.* But,

2. Taking the Will of God in the other Sense, for the Will of his Precepts or Commands, there are likewise several things which we may learn and be instructed in,

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by our Use of this Petition; *thy Will be done.* For,

(1.) Being here taught by our Saviour to make it a Matter of Prayer to God, that his Will may be done; that is, that he would please to give us his Grace to do those things which he requires of us. We may hence be admonished, that we can't of our selves do the Will of God as we ought to do, nor perform acceptable Obedience to him, without the divine Grace and Assistance: <sup>a</sup> for we need not be beholden to another for that which is in our own Power; we need not ask that of another, which we our selves can do without his Help. Being therefore here taught to pray every Day for the divine Grace, to enable us to do the Will of God, we are hereby reminded of our own Weakness and Impotence; that we can neither begin a good Work without the Motion of the

<sup>a</sup> Quid stultius quam orare ut facias, quod in potestate habeas? *Aug. de Nat. & Gratiâ. Cap. 18. in Brug. in loc.*

holy Spirit, nor make any Progress in Holiness and Virtue, without fresh Supplies of the divine Grace, according to that of the Apostle, *Phil. ii. 13.* *It is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good Pleasure.* Our Belief of this Truth, that we can do nothing well of our selves, without the Help of God, is plainly the Ground of this Petition; and this we do tacitly, and by Implication, acknowledge to God every time we repeat it. When we pray to God to give us his Grace, to do his Will, we own and confess that we are not sufficient of our selves to do any thing as of our selves, but that our Sufficiency is of God, as the Apostle says, *2 Cor. iii. 5.*

And the Consideration of the Necessity of the divine Grace, to enable us to do the Will of God, ought in Reason to make us diligent and constant in imploring it; according to that Direction which is given us by our Saviour, *Luke xi. 9, &c.* *Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:*—*for if ye, being evil, know*

*how*

*how to give good Gifts unto your Children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him?*

(2.) Being here taught by our *Saviour*, to implore the Assistance of the divine Grace, to enable us to do the Will of God, we may hence conclude that God requires nothing more of us, in order to render our selves accepted to him, than we are able, by the Assistance of the divine Grace, to perform. For certainly our *Saviour* would not teach us to pray for a thing which can't be; nay, he himself has told us that one of the Conditions of a prevailing Prayer to God, is to believe that our Request will be granted; *Mar. xi. 24. Whatever things ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them:* but if the Matter of our Request be impossible, we can't believe that it will be granted. Being therefore here taught by our *Saviour*, to pray that God's Will may be performed by us, it is certainly possible that it may be performed, tho'

not perfectly, tho' not without much Mixture of humane Frailty and Imperfection; yet at least with Sincerity, and in such manner, as God, considering our Infirmity, will for *Christ's* Sake graciously accept.

And the Consideration of this, that God requires nothing of us, but what by the Assistance of his Grace he will enable us to perform, is a good Encouragement to us to set about our Work with Cheerfulness and Vigour, and to keep us from ever being daunted or discouraged, by any Difficulty or Opposition which we may meet with in the doing of it; considering how mightily we are assisted by the divine Grace, we may say with the *Apostle*, that we *can do all things thro' Christ that strengtheneth us*; and setting to our Work with Courage, and good hope of Success, we shall find the Difficulty thereof much less than we feared.

(3.) As we pray, so we ought likewise to practise. If therefore we do earnestly desire that the Will of God may be done, we shall also earnestly endeavour the Accomplishment

plishment of our own Petition; and in order to this, we shall use all Diligence to acquaint our selves with the Will of God; by constant reading in the holy Scripture, in which the whole Will of God is plainly revealed, and which is *able to make us wise unto Salvation*. Being desirous to walk in the way of God's Commandments, we shall be careful to guide our selves by the Direction of his holy *Word*, which, as the *Psalmist* says, *is a Lamp unto our Feet, and a Light unto our Path*, Psal. cxix. 105.

And then when we know what the Will of our Lord is, it is our Duty, (a Duty indeed comprehending all other Duties;) which we are not only reminded of, but strictly obliged to by our Use of this Petition, to set our selves with all Diligence, to the doing of all those things which are required of us. For we contradict our own Petition, and are inconsistent with our selves, if ever we oppose in our own Practice, that good and perfect Will of God, which we pray may be done.

(4.) And lastly; by our Use of this Clause of the Lord's Prayer, we are not only taught the Necessity of Obedience to the Will and Command of God, but we are likewise instructed in the Nature and necessary Qualifications of an acceptable Obedience; for we pray not only that God's Will may be done in Earth by us Men, but that it may be *so* done by us on Earth, *as it is in Heaven*; *i. e.* as it is done by the holy Angels; and how that is, I have already shewed.

As therefore we desire in this Petition, that the Will of God may be done by *all* the Inhabitans of the Earth, as it is by *all* the holy Angels in Heaven; we ought to endeavour this, as much as lies in our Power, by teaching, instructing, and admonishing one another; we ought, according to the Apostle's Precept, to *consider one another, to provoke unto Love, and to good Works*, Heb. x. 24. But especially, our Zeal to reform the World, should be chiefly exercised in our own Families, which we should take Care to have well instructed

instructed in their Duties, and by prudent Discipline held to the Exercise and Practice thereof; according to the good Example given us by *Abraham*, the *Father of the Faithful*, concerning whom we have this Testimony given by God himself, *Gen. xviii. 19.* *I know him, that he will command his Children, and his Household after him, and they shall keep the Way of the Lord, to do Justice and Judgment.*

Again; as we pray that we our selves, and all Men upon Earth, may obey the Will of God with *Willingness* and *Cheerfulness*, as the Angels in Heaven do; we ought, in Compliance with our own Petition, to be cheerful in our own Obedience, to delight our selves in the Law of God; to love the thing which he commands, and to do the Will of God from the Heart; according to the Example given us by our blessed *Saviour*, in *Job. iv. 34.* *My Meat is to do the Will of him that sent me, and to finish his Work.* And thus likewise did the *Psalmist*; several Testimonies of which we have in *Psal. cxix.* *I have rejoiced in the way of thy Testimonies,*

*nies, as much as in all Riches, v. 14. I love thy Commands above Gold, yea, above fine Gold, v. 127. The Law of thy Mouth is better unto me, than thousands of Gold and Silver, v. 72. I rejoice at thy Word, as one that findeth great Spoil, v. 162. My Soul hath kept thy Testimonies, and I love them exceedingly. v. 167.*

Again; the holy Angels in Heaven, as they obey heartily, so they undertake readily, the Work they are set to; and thus we pray in this Petition, that we may do likewise; and as we pray, so we ought to practise. It is our Duty therefore which we are reminded of, and engag'd to, by our Use of this Petition, to undertake readily the Work and Business God has given us to do, to take the first Intimation of his Pleasure, and to comply with his Will upon the first Knowledge which we have of it; according to the Example of the same holy *Psalmist*, Psal. cxix. 59, 60. *I thought on my Ways, and turned my Feet unto thy Testimonies; I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy Commandments.*

Again;

Again; what the holy Angels undertake, at the Command of God, they *speedily* execute; they do their Work diligently, they lose no Time from it, 'till it be accomplished. And in this likewise we pray, in this Petition, that our Obedience may be like theirs. In order to which therefore it is our Duty, according to the Directions given us in Scripture, *not to be slothful in Business, but fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord, Rom. xii. 11.* And *whatsoever our Hand findeth to do, to do it with all our Might, Eccles. ix. 10.*

Lastly; the holy Angels (as I observed before) make no Difference in the Commands of God; they do not prefer one before another; they never decline any Work which they are set to: and such likewise our Obedience to the Commands of God ought to be; such we pray it may be, when we say, *thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven.* In Compliace therefore with our own Prayer, our Obedience ought to be *constant, and uniform, and impartial;* and unless it be so, according to the utmost of our Power, it will be neither

ther accepted by God, nor profitable to our selves; for *then*, says the *Psalmist*, *i.e.* then only, *shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy Commandments*; *Psal. cxix. 6.* And we are told by *St. James*, *Ch. 2. v. 10.* that *whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one Point, he is guilty of all.*

Thus the Will of God is done in Heaven, by the Angels, and thus we pray it may be done on Earth by us Men; in this manner therefore we ought to endeavour our selves to do it.

And indeed, after all which we can do, we shall be but unprofitable Servants; when we shall have done the best we can, we shall have only *done what was our Duty to do*; so that the only thing which can set any Value even upon our best Services, is when we thus do the Will of God from the Heart: when out of a true Love to God, we likewise have a Love to his Commandments, and take Delight therein, and perform them with a ready and willing Mind, and a cheerful Heart, as the Angels

Angels in Heaven do. And this, if we do, while we continue upon Earth, our Reward will be great in Heaven; and living now here, as the Angels do in Heaven, we our selves shall be made equal to the Angels, when we come thither.

*The God of Peace therefore, who brought again from the Dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the Sheep, thro' the Blood of the everlasting Covenant, make you perfect in every good Work, to do his Will in all things while on Earth, even as the Angels in Heaven do, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his Sight, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom, &c. be Glory for ever and ever. Amen.*



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theas in Heaven yea for this is  
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Kewang will be sent to Heaven; and  
and when he is sent to Heaven he will  
see we the people are in the world so  
who send us to Heaven we count the book.

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Give us, this Day, our  
*DAILY BREAD,*  
EXPLAINED.



Give us this Day our

DAILY BREAD

EXPLANATION



## DISCOURSE VI.

*Give us this Day our daily Bread,  
explained.*

MATTH. VI. 11.

*Give us this Day our daily Bread.*

**L**N the Lord's Prayer, of which I am now discoursing, there are, besides the Preface and the Conclusion, six Petitions; the three first respecting chiefly God's Glory, the three last our own Good. And of the three former I have already spoken; I come now to speak of the latter.

And here we very reasonably begin first with begging of God that Good which is the

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first in Nature, and without which we cannot be capable of enjoying any other Good, *viz.* the Preservation of our Being: and this we beg of God in the fourth Petition of the Lord's Prayer, of which I am now to discourse; *give us this Day our daily Bread.* Which Petition (according to the Method formerly proposed,) I shall first explain, shewing what Sense we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter these Words in Prayer to God: and II. I shall shew what good Lessons we may learn from our Use of this Petition; what Duties it instructs us in.

I. I shall explain the Petition, and shew what Sense we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter these Words in Prayer to God; *give us this Day our daily Bread.*

And for the Explication of it; I shall, 1. Shew what is meant by *Bread*: 2. What is meant by *daily Bread*: and, 3. Why we are taught to ask only for the Bread of the present Day; *give us, this Day, our daily Bread.*

i. What

I. What is meant by *Bread*.

Now Bread is the Staff of Life, as 'tis called in Scripture, *Lev.* xxvi. 26. 'Tis the main Prop and Support of our frail and mortal Bodies, *Psal.* cv. 16. 'Tis what we can't well live without, and with which alone we may live well enough, *Isaiah* iii. 1. And therefore Bread is oftentimes in Scripture set to signify whatsoever is necessary for the Support, Convenience, or Comfort of Life. *Ezek.* iv. 16. v. 16. xiv. 13.

And in this large Sense, without doubt, it ought to be taken here; for this Being the only Petition of the Lord's Prayer which relates to Temporals, it must be understood as comprehending all the temporal things which we have need of; so that in asking for Bread, we ask also for Drink and for Cloaths, and for Shelter from the Weather, and for Protection from Dangers, and for every thing else which is needful for us. For what we mean in this Petition, is, to beg the Preservation of this Life, and consequently by Bread, which is the only thing that we name in particular, we

must be understood to mean, whatsoever is necessary for the Preservation of Life, every thing which we cannot live without.

And this, I believe, was all which our *Saviour* design'd we should mean to pray for in this Petition, that is, only for all worldly Necessaries. Not but that when we utter these Words, we may also very piously enlarge our Desires; and at the same time that we beg Necessaries for our Bodies, beg Necessaries for our Souls too; and particularly for the Word of God, which is the Bread of Life, and as necessary for the well-being of our Souls, as Bread is for the Sustenance of our Bodies, according to that of our *Saviour*, Matth. iv. *Man shall not live by Bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God.* We may therefore, I say, understand this Petition in this large Sense, as praying to God for all manner of Necessaries, for our Souls, as well as for our Bodies; and for the next Life, as well as for this Life.

And so we are taught in that brief Exposition of the Lord's Prayer which is in the Church Catechism where the Scholar

being

being asked, [*What desirest thou of God in this Prayer?*] is taught, in that part of the Answer which relates to this Petition, to say, *I pray unto God that he will send us all things that be needful, both for our Souls and Bodies.*

But that other more restrained Sense, which I mentioned before of the Word *Bread*, understanding thereby only Necessaries for the Support of this Life, being the principal, if not the only Sense, in which I suppose our Saviour meant it in this Petition, is the only Sense of it which I shall at present insist upon; especially because the spiritual Sense of this Petition, according to which we are hereby supposed to beg Necessaries for our Souls, may, I think, be better reduced to the two following Petitions, *forgive us our Trespasses, and, lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil*; for those two things which we are taught to beg there, viz. Pardon and Grace, do comprehend as fully all things needful for our Souls, as this Petition, taken in its prime and natural Sense, does all things needful for our Bodies.

120. The second thing which, in order to the Explication of this Petition, I was to shew, is, what is meant by *daily Bread*; give us our daily Bread; in the Greek *ἀρτὸν ἡμέρασιν*. And concerning the strict and proper Meaning of this Word, *ἡμέρα*, there is a great Dispute among the Critics; but I think the most easy and natural Sense of the Word, as well as the most agreeable to this Place, is that of St. *Chrysostom*, who says, that is *ἡμέρα*, which is necessary *τὸν ζωτικὸν*; i.e. which is necessary for our Subsistence. So that what we mean, when in the Lords Prayer we beg of God our *daily Bread*, *ἀρτὸν ἡμέρασιν*, is so much Provision as is necessary for the Body, and no more than is necessary. We are not here taught to beg of God Riches and Honours, Dainties and Delicacies, but only Bread; and that not to please our Palates, and delight our Senses, but only to preserve our Bodies in Health and Strength; we desire not a full Barn, or a rich Wardrobe, or a sumptuous Palace, because without all these we may

may live, and we may live well enough too: but all that we beg for, is what we can't live without; or at most, only what we can't live well without; i. e. only the convenient Supports, Recruits, and Refreshments of Nature. So that the subject Matter of this Petition, the *αρτίστιον*, the *daily Bread* which we here beg for, is the same which the Prophet *Agur* prays for in *Prov. xxx. 8.* and calls *Food convenient* for him: *give me*, says he, *neither Poverty nor Riches; feed me with Food convenient for me.*

3. I proceed now in the third Place, in order to the farther Explication of this Petition, to shew what is the Meaning of our saying, *give us this Day*; why we are taught to pray for the necessary Provision only of the present Day.

Now the Word *σήμερον*, *this Day*, is a farther Restriction or Limitation of our Desires of temporal good things, which had been very much limited and restrained before. For when we were taught to ask only for *Bread*, our

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Desires were limited only to the Necessaries of Life; and when we were taught to ask only for *daily Bread*, or *sufficient Bread*, our Desires were again restrained only to Necessaries, only to such things as are requisite for our Being and Subsistence here. And when we are here taught to ask for a Supply of these Necessaries of Life, only for *the present Day*, give us *this Day*; this restrains our Desires still more; for by saying, give us *this Day*, we exclude all anxious Care and Thoughtfulness, even about Necessaries, for the future time: according to those Precepts of our Saviour which follow after, at the end of this Chapter; *take no Thought for your Life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your Body, what ye shall put on*, v. 25, &c. And again; therefore *take no Thought*, saying, *what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be cloathed?* And again; *take no Thought* for to-morrow, for *the Morrow shall take Thought for the things of it self*. Thus we are taught our Duty by express Precept; and this

this Duty we do in part practise, when we say this Petition of the Lord's Prayer, *give us, this Day, our daily Bread.* We desire not Store of Provision before-hand, but only necessary Provision, when we want it, and as we have Occasion to use it: not a full Granary, but a Meals Meat; not Goods laid up for many Years, but only such as we shall have Use and Occasion for this Day, which we are already entred upon. We do not desire to have an Estate settled upon us for Life, that so after that we may live of our selves, upon our own Income, without being farther beholden to any body; but we are contented to live every Day upon the fresh Supplies of Providence: and by putting up this Petition, by saying, *give us this day our daily Bread,* we do, in Effect, declare that we shall be well pleased if we do not want, altho' we should have nothing before-hand.

And there was good Reason why we should be taught to put up our Requests to God for temporal things, with this Restriction and Limitation; *viz.*

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(1) Because we are really dependent Creatures, and must live upon Providence whether we will or no; for we can never be so rich, and so well furnish'd and provided for, as not to stand in continual Need of the Blessing of Providence, to preserve our Store, and to make it useful to us. So that the rich Man has no less Reason to put up this Petition than the poor Man; for as rich as he is, he may, even in one Day's Time, by a Blast of Providence, become as poor as the poorest, be reduc'd so low as to want even a Meals-Meat.

Besides, there is good Reason that we should beg but only for the Necessaries of the present Day, because this is all which we are allowed to be concerned or thought ful about; *take no Thought for to Morrow*, says our Saviour; and if we may not be thought ful about to Morrow, then we ought to be content if we have now so much as will serve our present Needs, and not to be earnest in our Desires to have any thing, till we need it.

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More-

Moreover; there is great Reason in this Petition, *give us this Day our daily Bread*; because the Bread of this Day is all which we can need; nay, indeed, 'tis all which we can use at present; for if we had never so much Provision in Store, we could not eat or drink for a Week or a Month hence; and therefore, if we have but every Day as much as we have Occasion to use that Day, it is as well for us as if we had had it a Week or a Month before; for even then we could not have used it, we must have kept it by us till we had wanted it, and all that time it would have done us no good: so that if we have it but when we need it, we have as much of it as we can in Reason desire.

And so much may serve for the Explanation of this Petition; *give us, this Day, our daily Bread*. By what has been said we may see what Sense we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter these Words in Prayer to God; namely this, “ We are “ sensible, O Father, that our whole De-“ pendence is upon thee; that we have “ nothing, and can have nothing, but “ from

“ from thy Bounty ; and this Bounty and  
“ Goodness of thine we stand in need of  
“ every Day, for the Support of our Life  
“ it self, on the Continuance whereof de-  
“ pends our Enjoyment of all thy other  
“ Mercies. We beseech thee, therefore,  
“ that thou would’st be pleased to pre-  
“ serve that Life which thou hast given  
“ us, and in order to that, that thou  
“ would’st continually, as we have Need,  
“ bestow upon us all things necessary for  
“ the Support of Life ; Food convenient,  
“ wholesome Lodging, warm Cloathing,  
“ Health and Strength of Body, and  
“ whatever else thou seest needful for us,  
“ when we need it, and according as we  
“ need it. We desire that thou would’st  
“ so long preserve us in this Life, as is  
“ expedient either for thy Glory, or our  
“ own Good ; and so order things, that  
“ while we continue here our Life may be  
“ comfortable to us.” This is the Sum  
of what we beg of God in this Petition.

I proceed now, according to the Me-  
thod at first laid down, and which has  
been

been already observed, in all the foregoing Petitions,

II. To shew, in the second Place, what good Lessons we may learn from this Petition; what Duties it instructs us in. And,

I. Being here taught by our *Saviour* himself, to make our daily Bread, *i.e.* such things as are necessary for the Support and Comfort of this Life, a Matter of our constant and daily Prayer to God; and that too in this very short Prayer, consisting but of six Petitions in all: One thing which we may observe, and learn from hence, is this; that provided we do but *seek first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness*, we are allowed by God to seek for other things; *i.e.* for the Necessaries and Comforts of this Life, with a secondary and subordinate Care. For what we may pray to God for, that we may certainly desire; nay, indeed, our Prayers are hypocritical if we do not desire it; and what we may desire, that we

may

may seek and endeavour to obtain: from whence therefore it is plain that those evangelical Precepts, whereby we are commanded to *be careful for nothing*, and to *take no Thought what we shall eat, or drink, or put on*, are not to be understood absolutely, but comparatively; not as forbidding all Care for this Life, but only an excessive and preposterous Care, or an anxious Thoughtfulness and Concern about it. And this Moderation in our Care, for the things of this Life, we are taught even in this Petition; wherein (as I observ'd before) we beg only Necessaries, and those too only for the present Time, the Bread of this Day. And that our Care for these things ought to be subordinate to our Care for better things, is likewise clearly enough intimated by that Place which this Petition hath in our Prayer; for we pray not even for the Necessaries of Life, till we have first prayed for the Advancement of God's Honour, for the Enlargement of his Kingdom, and for the Performance and Accomplishment of his Will.

2. Ano-

2. Another good Lesson which we are taught by our Use of this Petition of the Lord's Prayer, *give us this Day our daily Bread*, is this; that God is the Giver of all good things to us, temporal as well as spiritual, and of our Life it self, and of the Continuance thereof. For it would be needless to beg our Bread of another, if we had it of our own, or could give it to our selves; and it would be fruitless, and to no Purpose, to beg it of God, if it were not his to give.

But alas! we our selves cannot subsist a Moment, much less a Day without him; 'tis *in him that we live, move, and have our Being*, Acts xvii. 28. *By him all things consist*, Coloss. i. 17. *He upholds all things by the Word of his Power*, Heb. i. 3. 'Tis his good Providence which delivers us from Dangers, some perhaps seen or foreknown by us, and a great many others which we are delivered from, before we so much as discerned our selves to be in any Danger. 'Tis he who provides Food for our Hunger, and Raiment for our

Cloathing

Cloathing ; who makes the Graſs and the Corn to grow for our Use, who gives to the Earth a fructiferous Nature, who waters it with the Dew and Rain from Heaven, and with the Springs which run among the Hills: 'tis he who refreshes it with his Sun, who gives fruitful Seasons, who grants us Power to gather in the Fruits of the Earth, and gives us Ability to use them for our own Sustenance: 'tis he who makes them yield kind and wholesome Nutriment to the Body, and gives us an Appetite to take, a Palate to relish, and a Stomach to digest them: 'tis he who make the Beasts of the Field to increase and multiply, to serve for our Use both of Nourishment and Cloathing ; and who gives us Skill to make Use of what they afford, for the Purposes it was designed. We are poor, sorry, helpless Creatures of our selves; we could do none of all these things for our selves, neither could any thing else be useful and serviceable to us without God.

We say indeed oftentimes, in common Discourse, that such a thing comes to pass

pass by Accident, or that such a thing is the Work and Effect of Nature; but when we say so, we speak foolishly and ignorantly; for there is in truth no such thing as Chance or Accident; for *not so much as a Sparrow falls to the Ground without God*, as our Saviour says, and even *the very Hairs of our Head are all numbered*. And when the *Lot is cast into the Lap, the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord*. Neither is there any such thing as Nature working blindfold, and by it self, without the Concurrence of the first Spring or Mover. For, as our Saviour likewise teaches us, 'tis God who *provides Food for the Fowls, and who cloathes the Grass, and Lillies of the Field*. So that what we call Chance is Providence; and what we ascribe to Nature, is the Work of the God of Nature; who knows exactly what Power and Strength he has given to second Causes, and could have given them more or less; and could, if he had pleased, as easily work and produce the same Effects, by

the Word of his Mouth, without natural Causes, as with them.

In a Word; whatever is the second and immediate Cause, 'tis God who is the first Cause of all; 'tis he who both gave us our Being at first, and every Moment continues us in it; and of his free Bounty gives us all things richly to enjoy. And all this we are taught to believe in this Petition of the Lord's Prayer; and all this we do actually acknowledge every time we repeat these Words, and say, *give us this Day our daily Bread.*

3. What is fit Matter of Petition when we want it, is just Ground of Thanksgiving when we have receiv'd it. If therefore God be the Author of our Being, and of the Continuance thereof, and of all the good things which we enjoy in it, to him of Right and in Justice belongs the Praise and Glory of all; and therefore, as we are here taught by our *Saviour* to look up to God for every thing, for Temporals as well as Spirituals; so we are taught by

by the *Apostle* to give *Thanks to God* in  
*every thing*, or for *every thing*, in  
*1 Thess. v. 18.*

And 'tis indeed a great Instance of Baseness and Disingenuity, to beg of God our daily Bread, and not also to thank him when he has given it; to own our Dependence upon him when we want and crave his Bounty, and not to confess the same when we have been Partakers of his Kindness; to discern from whence we must have a Supply when we stand in Need, and not to see who was our Benefactor when our Needs are supplied, and to render him our Thanks for the same.

And yet, as base and disingenuous as this is, 'tis a Fault which most Men are notoriously guilty of. Of the *ten Lepers*, who came to our *Saviour* to be healed, there was but *one* (tho' they were all healed,) *that returned to give Glory to God*, *Luke xvii. 18.* And I fear the Proportion of those now-a-days, who receive the Benefits of God with a thankful Heart, is not more or greater. When we are in Affliction, and have no Prospect of Help

from any other Hand, then we commonly betake our selves to God, and cry mightily to him for Deliverance ; but when we are delivered, we soon forget our Benefactor : like the *Israelites* in the Wilderness, of whom the *Psalmist* fays, *Psal. lxxviii. 34, &c.* that *when he slew them, then they sought him, and they returned and enquired early after God ; then they remembred that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer ; but when once their Danger was over, they remembred not his Hand, nor the Day when he delivered them from the Enemy, &c. 42.* And so it is generally with us ; we see the Need of his Help when we are in Distress, but we do not see the Kindness of it when we are deliver'd : when we want Bread, we go to God for it ; but when we are fed to the full, and waxen fat, like *Jesurun* we *kick against him, being grown thick, and covered with Fatness, we forsake the God that made us, and lightly esteem the Rock of our Salvation, Deut. xxxii. 15.*

But

But it should not be thus; and our constant and daily Use of this Petition is an excellent Means to cure us of our Unthankfulness; for when we say, to Day, *give us this Day our daily Bread*; if we mind what we say, and are affected with it, it can't but remind us that we receiv'd our Bread Yesterday from the same Hand from which we do now beg it, and that the Bread of Yesterday was then as necessary, and as seasonable a Supply, as the Bread of this Day will be now; and consequently that we ought in Reason to be as heartily thankful for the Good we have receiv'd, as we are now earnestly desirous to receive more.

4. Another good Lesson which we are instructed in, by our Use of this Petition, *give us this Day our daily Bread*, is this; that we ought to moderate our Desires of all worldly good things, and particularly that we should not extend them to a time very long hence to come: by our Use of this Petition we are plainly

taught that there is no Reason why we should do so.

For since 'tis the same God who gave us our Being, and who preserves us in it; since 'tis the same God, of whose Bounty we have already receiv'd all things needful, who must likewise supply all our future Needs, we have no Reason to distrust his Goodness or his Power; but may safely *cast all our Cares for the future upon him, who has hitherto cared for us*, and upon whom we have hitherto lived ever since we were born. For, as our *Saviour* argues, at the 25<sup>th</sup> ¶. of this Chapter, *the Life is more than Meat, and the Body than Raiment*; why then should we fear that he who has given us Life, will not give us wherewithal to support this Life? Or why should we think that he who has given us a Body, either cannot or will not give us Raiment to cloath the Body? For he who has done that which is more, is certainly able to do that which is less; and he who has done us a great Kindness already, will not certainly deny us a smaller.

Besides,

Besides, we are Creatures but of a Day ; our Life here is as nothing ; we may be past using any thing of this World, in a very short time ; why then should our Care for Life extend farther than our Life it self ?

To Day indeed we want many things, and therefore we may reasonably desire them ; we may well pray, as we are here taught by our Saviour, *give us this Day our daily Bread* ; *i. e.* all things which are needful for this Day ; but to Morrow we may be past using any of these things ; we may consequently then have no Need of them ; and if not, we shall be as well without them.

However, if we live till to Morrow, *the Morrow will take Thought for the things of it self* ; for we prayed Yesterday for our daily Bread, and we had it ; and we did put up the same Petition to Day, and it is granted to us : and therefore if we live till to Morrow, let us but only put up the same Request again ; and there is no Cause to doubt, but that God, our heavenly Father, who is *the same Yesterday*,

sterday, to Day, and for ever, will be as willing and as able to grant our Request then, as he is to Day, and as he was Yesterday, and indeed has been every Day of our Life which is already past.

If therefore he thinks fit to prolong our Life to another Day, there is no doubt but that, upon our Petition, he will grant to us the necessary Means of preserving it: and, on the other side, if it be his Pleasure that this shall be our last Day, we shall need to be concerned for no more.

5. From this Petition of the Lord's Prayer we are likewise instructed in the Nature of Contentment. We hence learn what Portion or Quantity it is, which we ought to be satisfyed and contented with; for we are taught here to desire and request of God, only *daily Bread*, i. e. only the Necessaries, or the great Conveniencies of Life; and therefore certainly, if we have all which we our selves do desire, and all which we ask for, we have great Cause to be satisfyed with our Portion.

And

And thus we are plainly directed by the *Apostle*, 1 Tim. vi. 7, 8. *We brought nothing into this World, and it is certain we can carry nothing out; and having Food and Raiment, let us be therewith content.* *We brought nothing into this World;* we came into it naked and helpless, not knowing in the least how we should do to live in it so much as one Day; and yet by God's Blessing we have hitherto lived in it, and have had all things needful supplied to us by the divine Bounty; and it is certain that we can carry nothing out; i. e. whether we have much or little in this World, when we go from hence we must leave all we have here behind us. And therefore, says the *Apostle*, seeing we had nothing of our own when we came hither, and seeing we can have nothing of our own, nor any Use of any thing which was our own, when we go from hence; if we have but enough to carry us thro' this World, this is all which we can have need of, this is all which we shall be the better for; and therefore if we have but

thus

thus much, we have good Reason to be satisfy'd with what we have; we have no Reason to murmur and complain against Providence, that we have no more. *Having Food and Raiment*, says he, (by which he means only the Necessaries of Life, and under which Words he comprehends all things that are necessary; *having Food and Raiment*,) let us be therewith content.

6. Another thing which we are instructed in, by this Petition, is our Obligation to Frequency and Constancy in Prayer; for here we are taught to pray only for the Bread of this present Day; *give us this Day our daily Bread*. Now suppose our Request granted; suppose that God does give us, this Day, the Bread of this Day, *i e.* all Necessaries which we have present Occasion for, yet what shall we do for the Bread of to Morrow? To Morrow, if we live till then, we shall have the same Needs which we have to Day; how shall we get them supplied? How do we think, but the same way by which

our

our present Wants are supplied; *i.e.* by Prayer to God? But we do not pray to Day for the Bread of to Morrow, and therefore it plainly follows that we must pray for that to Morrow; and the next Day, for the Bread of the next Day; and so again and again, every Day while we live. And every Day of our Lives, which we pass over without Prayer to God, we are in Danger of wanting even the Necessaries of Nature; for God has promised even these Necessaries only upon the Condition of our asking for them; and we are not taught, we are not warranted to ask for the Necessaries of any Day, till the Day it self be come.

Thus it appears that God design'd we should live in a constant Dependence upon him, and that we should pray to him continually; and if at any time we omit, or neglect this Duty, we have no Claim, by Promise, to his Protection and Blessing. He may indeed, of his abundant Goodness, give us what we want without our asking; and he is oftentimes very kind even to the unthankful and to the evil.

But

But from what God may do if he pleases, we can't argue that he will do it; so that we can have no good Assurance of the Continuance of his Kindness and Goodness to us, but upon the Condition of our own continual and incessant Prayers.

7. What we pray for, we ought also to labour for; and if we do not, 'tis a Sign our Desires of it are not hearty, and so we may reasonably fear our Prayers for it will not be successful.

This is generally true in all our Petitions to God, whatever the Subject Matter of them is. For even when we pray for Spirituals, as for any Grace or Virtue, unless we likewise endeavour after it, and use the Means of obtaining it, there is no Promise of God, nor any good Reason to hope, that he will work it in us, or bestow it upon us. And there is the same Reason for Temporals: and therefore another thing, which we are instructed in from this Petition of the Lord's Prayer, *give us this Day our daily Bread*, is, that 'tis our Duty also to seek honestly to get

get our own Living, by Diligence and Industry, in that lawful Trade, or Calling, or Profession; which we have been brought up to, or are placed in. For there is no Reason ever to expect any thing by a Miracle, which may be obtained by the Use of natural Means; and therefore we may observe, (and it is a Case which suits well the Subject we are now speaking of;) that while the *Israelites* were in a barren Wilderness, wherein was no Water, and nothing growing that was fit for Food, at least not sufficient for so great a Multitude; God was pleased to work Miracles for their Support: for *he clave the Rocks in the Wilderness, and gave them Drink as out of the great Depths*, Psal. lxxviii. 15. *He brought Streams also out of the Rock, and caused Waters to run down like Rivers*, v. 16. and made the Streams flowing from this Fountain to follow them all the way as they went; whence the *Apostle* says, *they drank of that Rock that followed them*, [1 Cor. x. 4. *vid. Ham. Annot. in loc.*] He shewed his miraculous Power also in furnishing a Table for them in

in the Wilderness, for he commanded the *Clouds from above, and opened the Doors of Heaven, and rained down Manna upon them to eat, and gave them of the Corn of Heaven*, Psal. lxxviii. 23, 24. Thus did God then, when there was no other Supply to be had, give them every Day their daily Bread, as it were immediately with his own Hand. But when the Reason of this Miracle ceased, the Miracle ceased too; when they might be supplied the ordinary way, God thought not fit to supply them any longer in this extraordinary manner; and so 'tis noted in *Josh. v. 12.* that when they were passed over *Jordan*, and encamped in *Gilgal*, they did eat of the old *Corn of the Land*; and that the *Manna ceased on the Morrow, after they had eaten of the old Corn of the Land*; neither had the *Children of Israel Manna any more*. They were then come to a Land inhabited, wherein the *Corn of the last Year's Harvest* had been laid up by the *Canaanites* against their Coming, and wherein they themselves, for the future, were to plant, and to sow, and to reap; and therefore God,

God, by putting a Stop then to the falling of Manna, shewed them, that now in a fruitful Land Labour and Industry would be the Means of obtaining their Bread from God.

And 'tis generally so; honest Labour is the natural Means of procuring such things as are needful for the Body; and there is nothing more than that, with the Blessing of God upon it, which is ordinarily needful for this Purpose. So that these being in our own Power, (for if God has given us Strength to labour, we may make Use of it; and if we beg his Blessing upon our Labour, he has promised to give it. I say, these being both in our own Power,) if we do not honestly work for our Living, as well as pray for it, we may be in want even of Necessaries, and yet there may be no Failure at all in God's Care and Providence; we may have none to blame for it, but our selves.

8. Being taught here to beg our Bread of God, we are hereby warned not to receive it but from him; not to receive it from

from the Devil, tho' it be offered to us by him.

Now then, we receive our Bread from God, not only when we receive it by a Miracle, as the *Israelites* did their *Manna* in the Wilderness; or as *Elijah* did the *Bread and Flesh*, which were brought him every Morning and Evening by the *Ravens*; but likewise when it is the Fruit of our honest Industry, in some lawful Calling, or when it comes to us by Gift or Inheritance from those who were lawfully possessed thereof.

And then, on the other side, we do receive our Bread not from God but from the Devil, when we procure it by any sinful Means, by the Exercise of any unlawful Trade, by any Fraud or Injustice in our Dealings, by committing any Sin, and making Shipwrack of a good Conscience, in order either to get or keep a Place of Profit.

For to beg our Bread of God, and at the same time to take any unlawful Course to procure it, is not only an Argument of our Distrust of God, and that we do not

think

think him able to grant our Requests, but 'tis likewise a great Indignity and Affront offered to him; for when we use any indirect or forbidden Means to obtain that which we seem to beg of God as his Gift, we thereby make it plainly appear, that all our Prayer to him is nothing else but Insinuation and Flattery; and that tho' we make our Court to him in Words, our inward Worship and Devotion is paid to the Devil.

9. Lastly; when we use this Petition of the Lord's Prayer, we do not say, give *me*, but give *us* our daily Bread; *i. e.* we beg for a Supply of other's Wants, as well as of our own; we pray that neither we our selves, nor any else, may want the Necessaries for the Support of Life. Now (as was said before,) what we pray for, we ought also to endeavour: so that another Duty, which we are likewise plainly instructed in, by our Use of this Petition, is the great Duty of Charity and Bounty to the Poor and Needy.

Q

For

For we pray to God that none may want, but we know there are a great many, who, either thro' Age or Sicknes, are not able to work for their Living; and that there are a great many working and industrious Poor, who either cannot get sufficient Employment; or who, by a full Employment, by rising early, sitting up late, and working hard all the Day, cannot get a sufficient Maintenance for their numerous Family of Children; and that there are likewise a great many others, who having once had enough both for their own Needs, and to contribute towards the Maintenance of the helpless Poor, are by some Act of Providence, as by Fire, Robbery, Inundation, or the like, reduced to great Extremities, and for the present rendred uncapable to follow their former Employments, for want of Stock to work upon. When therefore we pray that even these also, as well as others, may have their Wants supplied, we ought our selves freely to contribute towards their Support. And in case God has so blessed our Industry, that we have  
more

more than we need for our selves, it is our Duty to assign the Overplus, or at least a considerable Portion thereof, to the Use of those who have nothing, or not enough to maintain them; and by our very putting up of this Petition, we engage our selves to do so. And so St. James argues, *Jam. ii. 15, 16. If a Brother or a Sister be naked, and be destitute of daily Food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in Peace, be ye warmed, and be ye filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which be needful for the Body, what doth it profit?*

Indeed, when we have nothing to give to a Brother or a Sister that is needy, but good Wishes only; when they are all which we can give, they will be accepted; but when God has put it into our Power to do them good, as well as to wish them well, and we only pray that their Wants may be supplied, but will not give any thing of our own towards it; it is a certain Sign that our Prayers are not hearty, and that our Desires are not sincere; it's a certain Argument, that the

Love which we profess towards them is only in Word and in Tongue, not as it should be, *in Deed, and in Truth*, 1 Joh. iii. 18. For whatever a Man earnestly desires should be done, he, of Course, endeavours to do, if it be in his Power.

*Now he that administreth Seed to the Sower, both minister Bread for your Food, and multiply your Seed sown, and increase the Fruits of your Righteousness*, 2 Cor. ix. 10.



Forgive



Forgive us our

**D E B T S,**

As we forgive our

**D E B T O R S,**

**EXPLAINED.**



2745

2746



## DISCOURSE VII.

*Forgive us our Debts, &c. explain'd.*

MATTH. vi. 12, 14, 15.

*And forgive us our Debts, as we  
forgive our Debtors.*

*For if ye forgive Men their Tres-  
passes, your heavenly Father will  
also forgive you.*

*But if ye forgive not Men their Tres-  
passes,*

Q 4

*passes, neither will your Father forgive your Trespasses.*



HE first of these three Verses, that I have chosen for my Text, contains the fifth Petition of the Lord's Prayer, the four former I have already discoursed of; *forgive us our Debts, as we forgive our Debtors.* In which Petition there is first a Request put up to God, that he would forgive us our Trespasses; and secondly there is a Reason added to enforce the Request, or rather a Reason offered to God to induce him to grant our Request; *as we forgive our Debtors;* or as St. Luke expresses it, *Luke xi. 4. for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us.* And the two other Verses of the Text, *viz.* the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, give an Account of the Reason of the Addition of that last Clause in the Petition, *as we forgive our Debtors;* which (as our Saviour says) was this, because our Sins will not be forgiven to us only upon our Petition,

on, unless we our selves do shew such Mercy to Men, as we here request of God; but that if we forgive Men their Trespasses against us, then (upon our Repentance and Confession, and begging Pardon of God) he also will forgive our Sins and Trespasses against him. *For if ye, &c.*

Now, tho' it was very proper that this Account should be given of the Reason of the Addition of that Clause in the Petition, *as we forgive our Debtors, or, for we forgive our Debtors;* yet it was not fit, that when our *Saviour* was teaching his Disciples a Pattern or Form of Prayer, he should break off in the middle of the Prayer it self, to give this Account of that particular Clause; but it was more proper that he should first recite the whole Prayer throughout, and then afterwards, in a Discourse addressed to his Disciples, give the Reason of any Clause in it which might be liable to be misunderstood, or excepted against; this therefore he does; for after he had taught them the fifth Petition,

tition, at the 12<sup>th</sup> ¶. in the Words before read to you; *forgive us our Debts, as we forgive our Debtors*; he immediately adds, in the 13<sup>th</sup> ¶, the sixth Petition, and the Conclusion of the Prayer; and then, when he had quite finished the whole Prayer, he adds those Words before read, in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Verses, to give a Reason of that Clause in the fifth Petition, which he thought might not be well understood, or might be excepted against; and this Method of Discourse was proper and natural.

But my present Design being to treat of every Clause or Petition of this Prayer by itself, to give the Meaning thereof, and to ground a practical Discourse thereupon; I thought it would be more proper for me, now that I am treating of this fifth Petition, *forgive us our Debts, as we forgive our Debtors*, to treat also at the same time of that Reason which our Saviour himself gives of this Petition, in those two Verses which are added by the Evangelist, after he had recited the whole

whole Prayer. And this was the Reason why, when I named my Text, I named the 12<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> Verses; which three Verses do all belong to the same Subject; omitting, for the present, the 13<sup>th</sup> v, which belongs to another Subject, and contains the sixth Petition of this Prayer, and the Conclusion of it, and reserving that to be discoursed of at another time. *Forgive us our Debts, as we forgive our Debtors;* that's the Petition I am now to treat of; and then follows the Reason of the last Clause of the Petition; *for if ye, &c.*

In discoursing of this fifth Petition of the Lord's Prayer, I shall observe the same Method which I have done in discoursing of the foregoing ones; *i.e.*

I. I shall explain the Meaning of it, and shew what Sense we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter these Words in Prayer to God. And,

II. I shall shew what good Lessons we are

are taught, what Duties we are instructed in, and oblig'd to, by our Use of this Petition.

And, in speaking to these two Heads, I shall have Occasion to discourse as much as I suppose shall be needful, concerning those Words which are added by our *Saviour*, in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Verses, to give an Account of the Reason of his making our Forgiveness of others, the Condition of our asking Forgiveness of God. *For if ye forgive, &c.*

I. I shall explain the Meaning of this Petition, and shew what Sense we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter these Words in Prayer to God, *forgive us our Debts, as we, &c.*

*forgive us our Debts*; the Word, in the *Greek* of St. *Matthew's* *Gospel*, is, *ἀδενίματα*; which is truly and rightly here translated, *Debts*; but in the *Greek* of St. *Luke's* *Gospel*, 'tis *ἀμαρτίας*, i. e. *Sins*; and so 'tis there translated, *forgive us our Sins*: and in the Form which we do

do commonly use, we say, *Trespasses*; *forgive us our Trespasses*. By which Word, *Trespass*, we usually understand a less Fault than we do by the Word *Sin*: and this Word, I mean the Greek Word, *παράπτωμα*, which is usually translated a *Trespass*, is the same Word which is thrice used in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Verses, where our *Saviour* shews the Necessity of our forgiving Men their *Trespasses* against us, in order to our obtaining of God the *Forgiveness* of our *Sins* or *Trespasses* against him. *For if ye forgive Men their Trespasses, your, &c.*

But it is all one which of these Words we use, *Debts*, or *Sins*, or *Trespasses*; because in this Place they must all have the same Meaning: for what is a *Trespass* against God, but only the doing something which he has forbidden? And this is likewise a *Sin*; for *Sin* (as the *Apostle* says,) is the *Transgression of the Law*; and this same may also be well called a *Debt*; for by transgressing the *Law of God* in any Point, we become obnoxious to him, we

owe him Satisfaction for the Injury, either by making Reparation, or, (since that can't be done by us,) by suffering the Punishment due to our Transgression.

I shall therefore, for the Explication of this Petition, do these two things: 1. I shall explain the Matter of the Petition; I shall shew what it is which we here beg of God, what it is to have our Sins *forgiven* us. And, 2. I shall shew what it is which we do here declare we have done, and do; or do engage and promise that we will do, as a Condition on our Part, on which only we beg Forgiveness of God. *Forgive us, as we forgive our Debtors; or, as we forgive them that trespass against us.*

1. I shall explain the Matter of the Petition; I shall shew what it is which we do here beg of God; *forgive us our Trespasses*; what it is to have our Sins *forgiven* us.

Now by every Sin against God, by every Transgression of his Laws, we affront the

the divine Majesty, we resist and oppose his Authority, we do Wrong and Injury to him, to whom all our Service is due; but now every Injury done to another, naturally obliges to Satisfaction, and we continue unjust till we repair the Damage we have done.

This therefore is what, by our Sins against God, we have made necessary to our selves, we must repair the Injury we have done him, we must pay the Debt which we owe him.

But alas! this is impossible for us to do; for all the Good we can do, extends not to him; and tho' we should spend all the remaining Part of our Lives in his faithful Service, and never again at any time transgres his Commandments, this would be no Satisfaction or Amends to him. By this indeed we should avoid running deeper in his Debt; but our barely forbearing to contract a new Debt, cannot be accounted a Payment of the Debt we have already contracted: no Man is ever thought to pay what he has bor-  
row'd,

row'd, only by forbearing to borrow more. But this is all which we can possibly do, we can only forbear adding new Trespasses to our former, but we can by no Means ever recompense, or make him Satisfaction, for those which we have already done. It remains therefore that for these, we are, and always shall be liable to the Lash of the Law; *i. e.* obnoxious to suffer the Punishment threatned by the Law, to the Transgressors of it; for *cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the Law to do them.* And this Punishment comprehends all those Evils which God hath any where threatned to Sin, all manner of Evils, spiritual and temporal, and especially Death; *the Wages of Sin is Death*, says the *Apostle*, *i. e.* eternal Death; this appears by the Opposition which is there made by the *Apostle* between Death and Life; *the Wages of Sin is Death, but the Gift of God is eternal Life*; now that *Death* which is opposite to eternal Life, is *eternal Death*; *i. e.* the

*i. e.* the eternal Torment both of Body and Soul in Hell: this is the Wages of Sin, this is the Punishment due to every Transgression of the Law of God; and this is what, being Sinners, we are liable to be sentenced to, and to have inflicted upon us, whenever God pleases.

This therefore is what we pray for in this Petition, when we say, *forgive us our Trespasses.* We pray that God would be pleased not to exact this Punishment of us; we pray, that since we can make him no true Satisfaction for the Injury we have done him, he, of his great Goodness and Clemency, would be pleased to pass it by, and not exact any Satisfaction from us; *i. e.* that he would not inflict upon us any of those Evils which he has threatened to the Transgressors of his Laws; and above all, not that which is the proper Wages of Sin, the eternal Torments of Hell. This is what we ask in this Petition, that God would not impute our Sins to us, to our Condemnation.  
*Forgive us our Trespasses.*

R

But

But when we say, forgive us our Trespasses, it is suppos'd that we have trespassed; by the very asking Forgivenes of our Sins, we own that we have sinned: for if we had no Need of Pardon, (as we should not have if we were innocent,) there would be no Reason to ask Pardon. Nay indeed, to put up this Petition to God, to say, *forgive us our Trespasses*, when at the same time we are not conscious to our selves that we have sinned, and that we do greatly stand in Need of Pardon, is no better than mocking or trifling with God.

And therefore we may well understand this Petition, for Pardon of Sin, as including in it a Confession of our Sins to God, as well as a Prayer for Forgivenes.

I proceed now, in the second Place,

2. To shew what it is which we here declare we have done, and do; or do engage and promise that we will do, as a Condition on our Part, on which only we

we beg Forgiveness of God; forgive us our Debts, as we forgive our Debtors; or, as we forgive them that trespass against us.

And what we here declare and promise, is, that we have shewn, and that we do and will shew the same Kindness to our Brother who has injured us, which we beg God would shew to us who have trespassed against him.

Now, (as was said before,) what we beg of God, is, that since we cannot make him true Satisfaction for our Sins, he would not exact of us the Punishment of them; this therefore is what we here declare and engage, on our Part, *viz.* that we will not exact of our Brother a Debt which he owes us, if he be not able to pay it; or if he cannot recompense us for any other Injury, that we will not desire that Satisfaction which the Law, if we should go to the Strictness of it, would allow; *i. e.* to keep his Body in Prison, or to put him to Pain and Misery; by which we should only do

him Evil, but do our selves no Good, receive no real Amends.

In a Word; this is what we here engage and promise, that in Case of any Injury or Wrong done to us, by any Neighbour, we will be content with such Satisfaction as he can make us; that if he be not well able to make us perfect Amends, we will be satisfied with a smaller Recompence; and that if he can make us no Amends at all, we will freely forgive the Injury; neither doing him our selves, any Injury like to that which he has done us, nor so much as desiring that any such Evil may befall him; but that we will as truly desire, and as heartily endeavour to procure his Ease, and promote his Welfare, as if he had never done us any Wrong at all.

But whenever we made Profession of any thing which is good concerning our selves, we ought to do it with Modesty and Humility, and a kind of Distrust of our selves; it becomes us to have some Fear upon our selves, lest our natural Self-love should

should make us think of our selves more highly than we ought to think, according to the Example of the *Apostle*, 1 Cor. iv. 4. *I know nothing by my self, yet am I not hereby justified, but he that judgeth me is the Lord*; for we may see no Fault in our selves, our own Heart may absolve us, and yet God, who (as the *Apostle* says, 1 Job. iii. 20.) *is greater than our Hearts*, i. e. who knows what is within us, much better than we our selves do, may see that we are not so blameless as we think our selves; and therefore, I say, 'tis very reasonable, whenever we declare any thing concerning our selves, that is good, (as we do in this Clause of the Lord's Prayer, when we say that *we do forgive those that trespass against us*;) that we should do it with Modesty and Diffidence of our selves, and accompany our Profession of our own Sincerity, with a secret Wish or Petition, that God would be pleased to make us such, (if we are not perfectly such already,) as we do

R 3 declare

declare and believe our selves to be.

An excellent Example of this Humility, and modest Distrust of our selves, we have in *Mark ix. 24.* in the Man who brought his Son to our Saviour for Cure, who was possessed with a dumb Spirit; *I speake*, says he, *to thy Disciples*, *that they should cast him out*, and *they could not*, *¶. 18.* *But if thou canst do any thing*, *have Compassion on us*, and *help us*, *¶. 22.* *Jesus said unto him*, *If thou canst believe*, *all things are possible to him that believeth*, *¶. 23.* and then it follows, *¶. 24.* *And straightway the Father of the Child cryed out*, and *said with Tears*, *Lord, I believe*; *i. e.* if this be the Condition of my Son's Cure, that I should believe that thou art able to cure him, I have performed this Condition already; for I do firmly believe that thou art able to do it. And, in this, he doubtless spake the true Sense of his Mind. But then, knowing how deceitful the Heart of Man is, and that 'twas possible his Faith might not be so good

as

as he himself took it to be, he immediately adds the following Word, *help thou mine Unbelief. Lord, I believe, help thou mine Unbelief.* 'Tis as if he had said, I am not conscious to my self of any Weakness in my Faith, of any Mixture of Distrust or Doubtfulness in my Belief of thy Power to cure my Son, but there may be Faults in me which I my self cannot discern, and my Faith, perhaps, may not be so good as I take it to be; therefore, be thou pleased to help my Unbelief; *i. e.* if there be any Fault or Deficiency in my Faith, which I my self do not discern, be thou pleased of thy great Goodness to forgive it, and by the Help of thy Grace to supply it.

And with such Modesty and Humility, and Distrust of our selves, we ought always to utter these Words in Prayer to God, *forgive us our Trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us:* when we say, *as we forgive them that trespass against us;* we declare that we do, we promise that we will for-

R 4 give

give those who do us Wrong; and we can't say these Words with Sincerity, and in Truth, unless we do forgive them. Nay, indeed we not only mock God, but we likewise curse our selves, every time that we repeat this Petition of the Lord's Prayer, if at the same time we are conscious to our selves, that we bear Hatred and Malice in our Hearts, that we design or wish Evil to any Person who has done us Injury. But tho' we are in Charity with all the World, 'tis possible we may not be in such perfect Charity as we should be; 'tis possible there may be a Defect in our Charity, tho' we our selves do not discern it; 'tis possible that our Forgivenes of others may not be so full and hearty as it ought to be; and therefore 'tis very reasonable that we should always accompany this Profession or Declaration of our Charity to, and Forgivenes of others, with earnest Prayer to God, to supply the Defects of it by his Grace, and to make us grow and increase in it, every Day more and more.

This

This then is the full Meaning of this Petition; 'tis a Confession of our Sins, joined with a Prayer for the Pardon of them; and 'tis a sincere Declaration of our own Charity to others, joined with earnest Prayer to God for the Increase and Perfection of it. So that this is the Sense which we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter these Words in Prayer to God, *Forgive us our Trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us*; 'tis as if we should say.

“ We are sensible, O God, we are very sensible, that we have in many things transgress'd thy holy and righteous Laws. Our own Consciences witness against us, that we have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and that we have done those things which we ought not to have done; but we cannot call back our mis-spent time; and to undo our former Works, we are not able: and how to make thee any Recompence for our manifold Trespasses, we know not;

“ not ; and therefore we earnestly de-  
“ sire, and we also hope in thy Good-  
“ ness, that thy Debt, which we are not  
“ able to pay , thou wilt freely forgive  
“ us; for this is what thou hast com-  
“ manded us to do, to those who tres-  
“ pass against us. Thou hast made our  
“ Forgiveness of others the Condition of  
“ our obtaining Forgiveness from thee ;  
“ and this Condition, as being indeed very  
“ equal and reasonable, we approve of, and  
“ do fulfil. We here declare that we have  
“ dealt, and will deal so by others who  
“ offend or injure us , as we desire to  
“ be dealt with by thee. We here de-  
“clare that we have not, and will not  
“ demand, what we know they are not  
“ able to pay ; that we do not, and will  
“ not avenge their Wrongs, but heartily  
“ and fully forgive them, even as we de-  
“ sire to be forgiven by thee. And this  
“ Declaration we make before thee, in  
“ the Sincerity of our Hearts, and we  
“ hope there is nothing wanting on our  
“ Part, in our Forgiveness of others, to  
“ make

“ make us capable of thy Pardon : but  
“ if there be, and we cannot be sure  
“ there is not, then we humbly beseech  
“ thee to supply this Want, and to give us  
“ thy Grace, that we may never forfeit  
“ our Title to thy Pardon upon our Re-  
“ pentance, by denying Pardon, by bear-  
“ ing Hatred or Malice, or a Spirit of  
“ Revenge to any who trespass against  
“ us.

And so much may serve for the Explanation of this Petition.

But as all the former Petitions of the Lord's Prayer did instruct us in some Duties, so likewise does this. And this was the second thing I propounded to do, in discoursing upon these Words, *viz.*

II. To shew what good Lessons we are taught, what Duties we are instructed in, and oblig'd to, by our Use of this Petition; *forgive us our Trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.*

bnA

And

And there are chiefly three things which we may learn from hence. 1. In general; that there is some Condition necessary on our Part, to qualify us to obtain Pardon of our Sins. 2. And more particularly that our forgiving others their Trespasses against us, is a necessary Condition of obtaining our own Pardon. And, 3. Lastly; we are hence likewise instructed in the Nature of that Forgiveness, which it is our Duty to grant to those who trespass against us.

1. I say, we may hence learn in general, that there is some Condition necessary on our Part, to qualify us to obtain Pardon of our Sins; *forgive us our Trespasses, as we forgive; or, if we forgive; or, (as 'tis express'd in St. Luke,) for we forgive them that trespass against us.* Here is a Condition plainly suppos'd to be done and performed by us, at the time when we put up this Petition for Pardon.

And

And the Truth is, God has no where promised that he will pardon our Sins absolutely, without any Condition, or only upon the Condition of our asking Pardon; and what God has not promised to grant, we cannot ask with any Assurance of having it granted. For the only just Ground of a good Assurance, that our Prayers will be answered, is a Persuasion that the Matter of them is such as is agreeable to the Goodness and Promises of God; according to that of the *Apostle*, 1 *Job.* v. 14. *This is the Confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing, according to his Will, he heareth us.* Nay, indeed, to ask any thing of God which he has promised only upon Condition, without performing, so far as we are able, the Condition upon which he has promised it, argues a mean Opinion of God, and offers a direct Affront to him. For, by putting up such a Petition, we do as good as say, that tho' indeed God seems resolv'd not to grant us the thing which we ask, but upon certain Terms

Terms and Conditions, yet we hope to cheat him out of his Kindness by Flattery and fair Speeches, without performing the Conditions required by him.

Seeing then that Forgiveness of Sins will not be granted to us, but upon certain Terms and Conditions to be performed on our Part, it is our Duty to inform our selves what they are, and to endeavour, before we presume to put up this Petition, to qualify our selves to receive the Pardon which we pray for.

Now the Conditions upon which only God has promised to pardon our Sins, are these three: (1.) Repentance; (2.) Prayer; and, (3.) Forgiveness of others.

And the second of these Conditions we do actually perform, when we use the Lord's Prayer, or when we put up this same Petition in any other Form of Confession and Supplication; and the third of them, *viz.* our Forgiveness of others, is, as I said, a particular Duty which we are especially taught in this Petition, and of which I shall discourse somewhat by and

and by. So that the only thing now to be done, is to shew that Repentance is a necessary Condition of obtaining Pardon without which all our Prayers for it will be unavailable. And for the Proof of this, it may be sufficient to cite two or three plain Testimonies of holy Scripture, such as that of *Isaiah*, Ch. i. v. 16. &c. where after the *Prophet* had declar'd at large the Unacceptableness of the Prayer and Sacrifices of the *Jews*, he proposes this as the only Method to make them better accepted for the future, and available for their Pardon; *wash you*, says he, *make you clean, put away the Evil of your Doings from before mine Eyes; cease to do Evil, learn to do well; seek Judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the Widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; tho' your Sins be as Scarlet, they shall be as white as Snow; tho' they be red, like Crimson, they shall be as Wool.* And such another Place, to this Purpose, is that in

Ezek.

Ezek. xviii. 21, 22. If the wicked will turn from all his Sins that he hath committed, and keep all my Statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die; all his Transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him; in his Righteousness that he hath done, he shall live. And such another is that in Prov. xxviii. 13. He that covereth his Sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have Mercy. Upon these Terms Pardon was promised by God to Sinners in the Old Testament; and upon the same, and no other, it is promised in the New, as may be seen (to name no other Places,) in *Acts* iii. 19. *Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out.*

Seeing therefore we can obtain Pardon upon no other Terms than our Repentance, 'tis to no Purpose to pray for it, so long as we neglect to perform this

this Condition. And therefore from this Petition in the Lord's Prayer, wherein we are taught to pray for Pardon, we are likewise plainly instructed, that it is our indispensabla Duty, by a hearty Repentance for all our Sins, to qualify our selves to receive that Pardon which we pray for.

And the least that can be accounted Repentance, for any Sins, of any kind, which we have been guilty of, is an hearty Sorrow for what we have done amiss, and a sincere Resolution and Endeavour not to commit them again; this is the only Notion of true Repentance which the Scripture teaches; and therefore, unless we do thus truly repent us of our Sins, 'tis to no manner of purpose to put up this Petition of the Lord's Prayer, *forgive us our Trespasses*; for, till then, it will not be heard and answered.

But yet even these, I mean a Sorrow for our past Sins, and the forbearing to repeat them, are not a sufficient Repen-

[R] tance

tance for all Sins; for where it can be done, we must do more than this, I mean, we must undo our former Works, we must set to right what we have put out of Order; and this is what may be done in most of the Sins of Injustice towards Men. The Damage we have done to our Neighbour, we may repair; the Goods we have wrongfully taken or detain'd from him, we may restore; and for any other Injury which we have done him, we may make him Satisfaction. And this is what must be done, if we can do it, before we can say this Petition of the Lord's Prayer; *i. e.* before we may presume to beg Pardon of God for any such Sins. And so we are plainly taught by our *Saviour* himself, in *Matth. v. 23.* *If thou bring thy Gift to the Altar, and there remembrest that thy Brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy Gift before the Altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift.* But,

2. As from this Petition of the Lord's Prayer, wherein we are taught to beg Pardon of our Sins, not absolutely, but conditionally, as we forgive others; we learn in general that there is somewhat to be done on our Part, to qualify us for God's Pardon; so we hence learn more particularly, that it is our necessary Condition to qualify us to pray for the Pardon of our own Sins against God, that we should exercise the same Mercy and Compassion towards Men who have trespassed against us, which we our selves do beg of God.

This is plainly implied in the Petition it self; forgive us our Trespasses, *as we forgive them that trespass against us*; but is more clearly and expressly taught in the two last Verses of the Text, where our *Saviour* himself gives the Reason of his adding that Clause to the Petition, *as we forgive them that trespass against us. For*, says he, *if ye forgive Men their Tres-*

[R 2] *passes,*

*passes, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not Men their Trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your Trespasses.*

By the last of these Verses it plainly appears, that our Forgiveness of others, is a necessary Condition of obtaining Forgiveness of our own Sins; *If ye forgive not, &c.* And by the first Verse it should seem that this is the only Condition required of us; so that if we do but perform this, we need not be concerned about any thing else; for so our *Saviour* says, *If ye forgive, &c.*

But for the right understanding of this, it is to be consider'd, that it is very usual, in holy Scripture, to attribute one thing as an Effect, to another thing as its Cause; which yet has not in it self sufficient Power to produce the Effect which is attributed to it, and so is only a partial Cause of it, which could not produce the Effect without the Concourse of other Causes; and yet is so much a Cause too, that the other Causes without

without that would be as insufficient, as that would be without the others. We have several Instances of this in the beginning of this Sermon upon the Mount, wherein our *Saviour*, in those Sentences commonly called the *Beatitudes*, pronounces a Blessedness, and promises the Reward of Heaven, first to *the poor in Spirit*, then to the *Mourners* for Sin, then to *the Meek*, then to those who *hunger after Righteousness*, then to *the Merciful*, then to *the pure in Heart*, then to *the Peace-makers*, and at last to those who are *persecuted for Righteousness sake*; and yet 'tis certain that the Promises of the Gospel are not made to any one single Grace or Virtue, but to all in Conjunction.

And so 'tis here; Forgiveness of Injuries done to us, tho' it be a necessary Condition of our own obtaining Pardon from God, is not the only one. And this, I suppose, might be the Reason why, when our *Saviour* had spoken those Words in the 14<sup>th</sup> x. *If ye forgive*

[R 3] *Men*

*Men their Trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.* By which we might have been led into a Mistake, and have been induced to think, that Mercifulnes was the *only* Qualification requisite to intitle us to the divine Mercy. He immediately adds those other Words, in the 15<sup>th</sup> ¶, to prevent that Mistake; wherein he explains the foregoing Words, and plainly declares his Meaning to be, not, that if we forgive others, our Sins, without any other Condition or Qualification, will be forgiven us; but only that all other Conditions and Qualifications will be insufficient without this; that this is at least as necessary a Condition as any other. *If ye forgive not Men their Trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your Trespasses.*

And as this is a necessary Condition of our obtaining Pardon, so it is plainly a very equal Condition; for it is but reasonable that we should do as we would be done unto; that when we ask

ask for Pardon our selves, we should freely grant it to those who ask it of us.

And the Reasonableness of this Condition is most excellently shewed by our Lord himself, in *Matth. xviii. 23, &c.* particularly upon these two Accounts.

(1.) Because God, whom we have sinned against, and whose Pardon we ask, is our Sovereign Lord, infinitely superior to us, and we are his Creatures, his Slaves, his Vassals; but Men are all (in a manner) upon equal Terms with one another, for they are all Fellow-Servants of the same Lord; and therefore their Trespasses against one another, (tho', as to the Matter of them, they were the same with our Trespasses against God; yet) being committed only against Equals, would not be so heinous and unpardonable as our Sins are against him: for it is plainly a much greater Fault in a Subject, to affront or strike his King, than it is to affront

[R 4] or

or strike his Fellow-Subiect. And,

(2.) Because our Offences against God are really greater in themselves, than any Man's Offences are or can be against us: so that altho' we stood upon the same Terms, and on the same Level with Almighty God, which we do with one another, yet it would not be reasonable in us, to desire of him to pardon us our great Transgressions, unless we also can find in our Hearts to pardon others their lighter Trespasses against us.

Both these Reasons, I say, shewing how very fit and equitable it is, that we should shew to others the like Mercy which we desire of God, are excellently set forth by our *Saviour*, in that Place, in the Parable of a certain great King, who reckoning with his Servants, found one who owed him *ten thousand Talents*; <sup>a</sup> i. e. almost two Millions of

<sup>a</sup> *Vid. Marg. of gr. Bible.* A Talent is 750 Ounces of Silver; 10000 Talents, at 5s. 2d. per Ounce, is 1937500*l.*

our

our Money; which great Debt nevertheles, forasmuch as the poor Man was not able to pay it, the King frankly forgave. But mark what follows, at  $\S.$  28. This same Man goes forth, and meets with one of his Fellow-Servants, who owed him but an hundred Pence<sup>b</sup>, *i. e.* little more than  $3\text{l.}$  of our Money; a very Trifle, in Comparison with the great Debt which had been just before forgiven him; (for an hundred Pence is not so much in Proportion to ten thousand Talents<sup>c</sup>, as one Peny of our Money is to two thousand Pound;) and as soon as ever he sees him, he takes him by the Throat, saying, Pay me what thou oweſt; upon which the other fell down at his Feet, beseeching him but only to have a little Pa-

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<sup>b</sup> A Penny is the eighth Part of an Ounce, *ergo* 100 Pence, 12 O.  $\frac{1}{2}$ . *i. e.* at 5 s. 2 d. per Ounce, amounts to  $3\text{l. 4s. 6d.}$

<sup>c</sup> 100 Pence is to 10000 Talents, as one Penny to 2508 l. 12 s. 3 d. 10000 Talents is 602067 times as much as 100 Pence.

tience with him, and he would pay him: but he would not, but went immediately, and cast him into Prison. And see what Judgment the King passed upon him for it, at the 32<sup>d</sup>, &c. Verses; *Then his Lord, after he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked Servant, I, i. e. I who am thy Lord and Master, who had more Power over thee, than thou hadst over him, I forgave thee all that Debt, that great Debt of ten thousand Talents, because thou desiredst me, and shouldst not thou also have had Compassion on thy Fellow-Servant, even as I had Pity on thee? i. e. was there not good Reason then, that when thy Fellow-Servant owed thee only such a small Sum as an hundred Pence, (not the six hundredth thousandth part of the Sum which I forgave thee;) and when he only desired time, and would, 'tis like, have been able to pay thee, if thou hadst given him time; (was there not good Reason, I say,) that thou shouldst*

should'st shew the like Compassion to him, (for the same it would not have been, but infinitely beneath it,) which I had shewed thee. And then it follows, *¶. 34. And his Lord was wroth, and delivered him to the Tormentors; and so likewise*, says our Saviour, at the *35<sup>th</sup> ¶.* (applying the Parable to this very Case;) *so likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your Hearts forgive not every one his Brother their Trespasses.* And this same Argument is very well urged by the Son of Syrach, [*Ecclus. xxviii. 1, &c.*] in these Words, *He that revengeth, shall find Vengeance from the Lord; and he will surely keep his Sins in Remembrance. Forgive thy Neighbour the Hurt that he hath done unto thee, so shall thy Sins also be forgiven when thou prayest. One Man beareth Hatred against another Man, and doth he seek Pardon from the Lord? He sheweth no Mercy to a Man which is like himself, and doth*

*he*

*he ask Forgiveness of his own Sins?*  
But,

3. Lastly; from this Petition we not only learn the Necessity of Forgiveness of Injuries, but we are also in good Measure instructed in the Nature of that Forgiveness which it is our Duty to grant to those who trespass against us; for we pray to God to forgive us, *as we forgive them.* But now,

(1.) What we here desire of God, is, that he would forgive us all our Sins, the great as well as the small; or indeed those rather than these: for tho' no Sins are indeed small, yet some are more heinous than others; and it is for our great and crying Sins, which we are most in fear of the divine Vengeance, and for which we are most earnest in asking Forgiveness. We therefore, if we hope or expect to have these greatest Sins forgiven us, ought likewise to forgive the greatest Injuries which are done to us by others.

(2.) We

(2.) We pray for the Forgiveness of our Sins, tho' they are many; and we pray, or at least we should pray every Day for the Forgiveness of them; and we hope that tho' our Iniquities (as the *Psalmist* says, *Psal. xl. 12.*) are *more than the Hairs of our Head*, we shall yet obtain Remission of them.

The Mercy, therefore, which we hope and expect from God, should be a Pattern to us in shewing Mercy to others. Our Patience should never be tyred out, we should never be weary of forgiving. And so we are taught by our *Saviour* himself, *Luke xvii. 4.* *If thy Brother trespass against thee seven times in a Day, and seven times in a Day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him;* and that by seven times our *Saviour* meant not a small, not any limited Number of times, appears plainly by his own Answer to St. *Peter*, *Matth. xviii. 22.* For when St. *Peter* had put the Question to him, how often it was his Duty to forgive

give his Brother, whether until seven times; our Lord answered him, *I say not unto thee, until seven times, but until seventy times seven.*

(3.) Lastly; the Pardon which we desire of God is full and effectual; we pray that he would clearly blot out all our Iniquities, and free us from all the Punishment thereof.

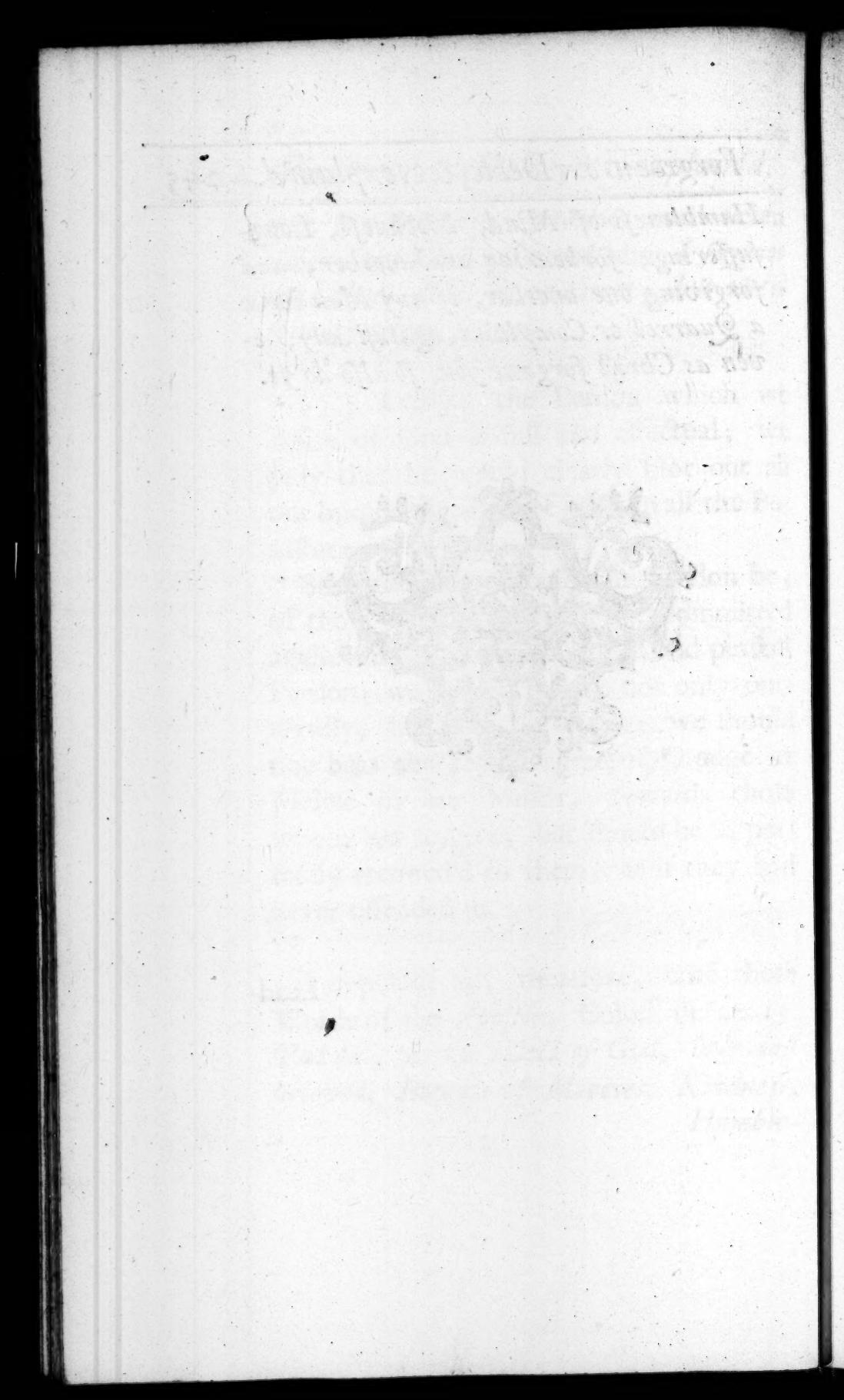
Such therefore should our Pardon be, of those Trespasses which are committed against us; it should be a full and perfect Pardon; we should forgive not only outwardly, but from the Heart; we should not bear the least Degree of Grudge or Malice in our Minds, towards those whom we forgive, but should be as perfectly reconcil'd to them, as if they had never offended us.

I conclude all, therefore, with those Words of the *Apostle*, Coloss. iii. 12, 13. *Put on, as the Elect of God, holy and beloved, Bowels of Mercies, Kindness, Humble.*

*Humbleness of Mind, Meekness, Long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any Man have a Quarrel or Complaint against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.*



Lead





Lead us not into

TEMPTATION, &c.

EXPLAIN'D.



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EX 511



## DISCOURSE VIII.

Lead us not into Temptation,  
but, &c. Explain'd.



M A T T H. VI. 13.

*And lead us not into Temptation, but  
deliver us from Evil.*



N the *Lord's Prayer* (as I have formerly observed) are Three principal Parts, The Preface, The Body of the Prayer, and The Conclusion.

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The

The Preface consists of a Solemn Invocation of Almighty God, whom we are taught to Stile, *Our Father* which is in *Heaven*.

The Body of the Prayer consists of Six distinct Petitions.

And the Conclusion contains a Doxology, or a Solemn giving Glory to God; *Thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever.*

And of the Preface, and of Five of the Petitions I have already spoken; the Sixth Petition is what I am now to Discourse of; *Lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil.*

In Discoursing on which, I shall observe the same Method that I have before done in Discoursing on the other Five, *i. e.*

I. I shall explain the Meaning of the Petition, or shew what Sense we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter these Words in Prayer to God, *Lead us not into, &c.* And,

II. I

---

II. I shall shew what good Lessons we may learn, what Duties we are taught and instructed in, by our Use of this Petition.

I. I shall explain the Meaning of the Petition, and shew what Sense we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter these Words in Prayer to GOD, *Lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil.*

And this Petition consists of Two Parts, not exactly the same, and yet not much differing in Sense from each other.

1. *Lead us not into Temptation;* and,
2. *Deliver us from Evil.*

1. *Lead us not into Temptation.* For the understanding of which we must enquire, (1.) What is meant by *Temptation*; and, (2.) How *God* may be said to *lead us into it*.

(1.) What is meant by *Temptation*.  
And,

1. The Word *Temptation* most properly signifies nothing else but only a Trial or Experiment made of any Person, to see of what Temper and Disposition he is, and how he is morally qualified. And thus God tempted *Abraham*, when he laid upon him that hard Command of Sacrificing his only Son *Isaac*; by which God made a full Trial of his Faith and Obedience, and declared himself fully satisfied therewith; as the Angel speaking in the Name of God, and of God after the manner of Men, testifies, *Gen. xxii. 12.* *Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy Son, thine only Son, from me.*

And thus all Afflictions and Adversities that befall the Body are *Temptations*: *i. e.* They are Trials of our Faith and Patience. *My Brethren*, says St. James, *count it all Joy when ye fall into divers Temptations*; *i. e.* when ye are persecuted and afflicted.

And thus, likewise, Prosperity is also a *Temptation*; for 'tis a Trial of our So-

Sobriety, and Humility, and Trust in  
God.

Thus indeed all the different States and Circumstances that any of us are in, are *Temptations*; *i. e.* They are such Trials as God sees good to make of our Faith and Virtue; not to satisfy himself (for he knows before-hand what we will do) but to satisfy our selves and others, how we stand affected towards him, and to make the Righteousness of that Judgment which he will pass upon us, either to Salvation or Damnation, evident to all the World.

Now against these and all such Temptations as these in general, we ought not to pray; for they are the necessary Condition of our Living here in this World; our whole Life here being nothing else but a State of Trial, and consequently of Temptation; such as it was necessary we should be put into, in order to make us capable of either Reward or Punishment. For there would be no Virtue if there were no Trial of Virtue, and no Vice

if there were no Temptation or Induce-  
ment to it ; it being hardly to be suppo-  
sed that any Man that believes a future  
State, or has any Sense of Religion, would  
chuse to commit Wickedness, only for its  
own Sake, without any Prospect of Pro-  
fit or Pleasure, or some other worldly Ad-  
vantage. And if we manfully resist these  
Temptations that we are assaulted with,  
our Reward in Heaven will be great, pro-  
portionally to the Power and Strength of  
those Temptations that we meet withal  
and overcome. And therefore St. *James*  
(as I observed before) in the first Chapter  
of his Epistle, at the 2d Verse, bids us to  
*count it all Joy when we fall into divers  
Temptations; knowing this, that the Trying  
of our Faith worketh Patience.* And ver. 12.  
*Blessed, says he, is the Man that endureth  
Temptation; for when he is tried he shall  
receive the Crown of Life, which the  
Lord hath promised to them that love him.*

2. Therefore, because sometimes we  
do not abide those Trials which God  
makes

makes of us, but sink under them, and are overcome by them, (therefore, I say) the word *Temptation* is sometimes, and indeed most commonly, us'd in a bad Sense, for such an Allurement and Inducement to Sin, as does actually prevail with us to commit the Sin ; or for such a Trial of us, as is made with a Design that we should commit the Sin which we are tempted to.

And thus the *Devil* tempts us ; that is, he allures and invites us to commit Sin ; he lays Baits for us of a delicious Taste, or finely gilded over, which he hopes we will catch at, and take in, and with them swallow down also the Hook that was cover'd over therewith. And thus to pray that we may not fall into Temptation, or be *led into Temptation*, is the same Thing in Effect, as to pray that we may not fall by the Temptation, or that we may not fall into the Sin that we are tempted to, or that we may not be ensnar'd and taken Captive by the Devil.

But

But taking the word *Temptation* in this Sense, God does never tempt us ; we we can't consequently, taking the Word in this Sense, pray that God would not lead us into *Temptation* ; for he never designs our Sin or Fall by any Trial that he makes of us , but only our Improvement in Grace and Virtue. And thus we are taught by St. James, Jam. 1. 13. *Let no Man say, when he is tempted, i. e. when he actually falls into any Sin, (let him not say) I am tempted of God ; i. e. I was seduc'd and betray'd thereinto by God ; for God cannot be tempted with Evil, neither tempteth he any Man.*

But now, if it be so, that the first Sort of the Temptations before spoken of ; i. e. the Trials of our Faith and Obedience, are such as we ought not to pray against, but rather to rejoice at, as has been shewn already : And if the last Sort of Temptations, those which are design'd to ensnare us, are such as God doth not use upon us, for he never designs to allure or invite us to commit Sin ; He tempteth no  
*Man,*

Man, as St. James says; How is it that we are taught in this Petition to pray to God that *He* would *not lead us into Temptation*? For all God's Temptations are design'd for our Good, for the Exercise of our Virtue, and the Increase of our Reward: And the other Temptations, those which are design'd for our Hurt, are the Devil's Temptations, and not God's. This therefore was the next Thing I was to give an Account of; *Viz.*

(2.) How God may be said *to lead us into Temptation*.

And the Case is this; Tho' it be the Devil that tempts us to Sin, he could do nothing without God's Permission: And such is his Subtilty and Power, and such is our Easiness and Weakness, that his Temptations must needs prevail against us, unless God be pleas'd by his Grace to assist and enable us to overcome them. So that whenever God suffers the Devil to tempt us above our Strength, or by such a strong Temptation as can hardly

but

but prevail ; or when he does not furnish us with supernatural Strength to resist such Temptations ; In any of all these Cases, God may , in some Sense , be said *to lead us* (because he, who if he pleased could easily hinder it, suffers us to be led) *into Temptation.*

This therefore is what, in this Petition, we pray that God would not do, that he would not so lead us into Temptation ; *i. e.* that He would never suffer us to be tried above our Strength ; or that if the Temptation that he suffers us to be assaulted with, be such as would prevail against our Weakness, he would be pleas'd so to strengthen us by his Grace, that we may be able to resist it.

And this is a Petition which we have good Warrant to put up to God, because it is no more than God, who is Faithful, has promis'd , *1 Cor. x. 13.* *God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what ye are able; but will with the Temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*

But

But now if this be God's Promise, and he, being *faithful*, will certainly make it good, not to *suffer* us to be tempted *above what we are able*; here rises another Difficulty; *viz.* what Need there is of our Praying for that which God will certainly do, whether we pray for it or no.

But this Difficulty will be easily remov'd, by considering these Two Things.

1. That this Promise of God, that he will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, or that he will grant us sufficient Grace to withstand and overcome the Temptations we are assaulted with, is, like all the other Promises of the Gospel, a Conditional Promise, to entitle us to which there is something to be done by us: And particularly, that Prayer to God is the Condition to be perform'd on our Part, to give us a Right and Title to this Promise of God; that Prayer to God is the Condition of our obtaining sufficient Grace, according to that of our Saviour, Matth. vii. 7. *Ask, and it shall be*

*be given you*; by which he plainly intimates, that unless we do ask we may go without it: And so St. James says expressly, *Jam. iv. 2. Ye have not, because ye ask not.* And yet in this Case our Sin and Destruction may be of our selves, because we might, for the asking, have had sufficient Grace to avoid them. But then it may be consider'd further,

2. That if there were no Condition Pre-requisite for the obtaining of sufficient Grace; if we might be sure of it without our asking, by virtue of this Promise; yet this, as well as any other Right or Privilege which we once had a Title to, may be forfeited by our Misbehaviour.

And this may be, and without Doubt oftentimes is, the Case here. God at first suffers us not to be tempted above our Strength, and this he does of his meer Goodness, without any Condition on our Part: And so long as we make good Use of that Grace which is afforded us, so long our Title to a sufficient Measure of it

it holds good. But if we at any Time, wilfully and deliberately chuse the Commission of a Sin, while we had sufficient Strength to resist the Temptation, we thereby forfeit all our Right and Claim for the future. And the same Goodness which gave us sufficient Grace at first, and which would still have continued to do the same, if we had been careful to co-operate with it, may not give us sufficient Grace every Time afterwards that we are tempted; but rather, our sinning wilfully, when we had sufficient Grace given us to keep us from sinning, may justly provoke God to lessen or withdraw that Grace which we have so much abus'd; according to that Threatning of our Saviour, *From him that bath not, shall be taken away, even that which he bath.*

And indeed besides; If God should continue to us the same Measure of Grace afterwards that he had communicated to us before, (which yet is more than can reasonably be hop'd) 'tis to be consider'd

never-

nevertheless, that such a Measure of Grace as was before sufficient, may not be sufficient afterwards; because that Grace that was before given, might be proportion'd only to our natural Weakness; and by every wilful Sin we render our selves weaker and weaker, and consequently needing a greater Measure of Grace to keep us from falling; and tho' God may be thought to be (if we may be allow'd so to speak) under some sort of Obligation in Equity, so to assist our weak Nature as that we should not at first necessarily fall into a Sin, he can't be thought oblig'd upon the same Account to increase his Grace when we come to have Need of a greater Measure of it than we had at first; because that we have now need of more Grace than we had then, is our own Fault only, who have weakened our Nature by Evil Custom: And there is no Reason to expect, that God's Grace should abound according as our Sin does abound.

Now

Now this is in Truth the Case ; we had sufficient Strength once, either by Nature or by Grace, (and 'tis no Matter now by which) to have withstood those Temptations to Sin which God did then suffer us to be assaulted with ; it was our own Fault, therefore, that we then fell, when we had Strength to stand ; and ever since that first Fall, we have fallen very frequently ; (this we own'd in the former Petition, when we prayed for Forgiveness of our Trespasses ;) And therefore having by our own Sin forfeited all Claim to the Divine Grace, there is great Reason that we should now beg it as a Favour, since we can't claim it as a Due, that God would not lead us into Temptation ; *i. e.* That either he would not suffer us to be tempted above our Strength, that is, not above those Remains of the Strength of Nature that are still left to us ; or else, in Case he sees fit to permit us to be assaulted by more violent Temptations, that he would be pleas'd to give us such a Supply of his Grace, as may

T be

be sufficient to strengthen our Weakness, and to enable us to resist and conquer them.

Thus we pray that God would not lead us into Temptation, *i. e.* that in this State of Trial and Temptation, which we are now put into by the Divine Providence, he would be pleas'd to have Consideration of our Weakness; *viz.* both of the Weakness of our frail Nature, and also of that greater Weakness which we have contracted by our former Sins, and never suffer us to be tempted above what we are able. *Lead us not into Temptation.* But it follows in this same Petition,

2. *But deliver us from Evil*, the Meaning of which Words I am now to shew.

And there are Three Significations of the Word *Evil*, all which are consistent together, and agreeable to the Scope and Design of the Place, and therefore however we may approve any one of them more than another, I do not see why we should exclude any of them. For,

i. By

1. By the *Evil* that we here pray to be delivered from, we may understand the *Evil of Sin*, which is sometimes in Scripture called *Evil*; as in *Habak.* i. 13. *Thou art of purer Eyes than to behold Evil.* And taking the Word in this Sense, this Clause of the Petition, *Deliver us from Evil*, will be the same in Sense with the former, *Leed us not into Temptation*; For then, what we here pray for will be, that God would so assist us by his Grace, that we may not fall by any Temptations that we are assaulted with. Or,

2. By *Evil*, we may understand the *Evil of Punishment*; which is likewise in Scripture sometimes express'd by that Word, as in *Jer.* xviii. 8. In which Verse we have an Instance of the Word *Evil*, used both in this Sense, and in the former Sense of it. *If*, says God, *that Nation against whom I have spoken, turn from their Evil*, (i. e. from the Evil of their Ways) *I will repent of the Evil*, (i. e. of the Evil of Punishment) *which*

*I had thought and threatned to do unto them.* And so it is likewise said in *Jonah* iii. 10. *That God repented of the Evil that he said he would do unto Niniveh, and he did it not; i. e.* He did not bring that Destruction upon them which he had sent *Jonah* to denounce against them. And taking the Word *Evil* in this Sense, this Clause of the Lord's Prayer will be much the same in Sense with the Fifth Petition, *Forgive us our Trespasses*; For then our Sins are forgiven us by God, when the just Punishment of them is remitted, when we are deliver'd from that Evil which we had deliver'd to suffer. Or,

3. *Lastly*; By *Evil* we may understand the *Evil One*, *i. e.* the *Devil*, who is sometimes in Scripture so called; as particularly in *1 John* iii. 12. *Not as Cain, who was of that wicked One,* ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ, the same Word that is used here, *Deliver us from Evil, and τοῦ πονηροῦ*, from the *Evil One*. And he may well be called, the

the *Evil One*, because he was the first Author of all the Sin that has been in the World, and of all the Misery that has been, or ever will be caused thereby.

Now these Three Senses of the Word *Evil*, are (as I said before) all consistent with, and subordinate one to the other, so that I think they may *all* be well enough understood to be design'd in this Place, when we are taught to say, *Deliver us from Evil*; For by the *Evil of Sin*, we render our selves obnoxious to the *Evil of Punishment*, and particularly to that greatest of all Punishments, to be *led Captive* by the *Devil* here, and to be eternally *tormented* by him hereafter.

The Sense then that we ought to have in our Minds, when we utter the Words of this Petition, is this, as if we should say; "We know, O Lord, that we are "set in the midst of many and great "Dangers, by reason of the various "Temptations that we are subject to in "this Mortal Life, which we can't resist "but by thy Help; and therefore we

“ pray thee, without whose Appointment or Permission, nothing can happen to us, that either thou would’st not suffer us to be tempted strongly, or else that thou would’st be pleas’d to grant us such a large Supply of thy Grace, that we may not fall by any Temptation, how strong soever it be; but that being by thy Help preserv’d from all Sin, we may also clearly escape the Punishment thereof, both in this World and in the next. *Lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil.*

And now, having explain’d the Meaning of this Petition, I proceed in the Second Place, according to the Method before laid down,

II. To shew what good Lessons we may learn, what Duties we are taught and instructed in by our Use of this Petition. And,

1. *As we pray, so we ought to practise*; This is a general Rule of Duty; we should never pray for any Thing, but we should at the same Time endeavour, by the Use of all lawful Means that are in our Power, to procure the same to our selves; For God is no Friend to Sloth and Laziness; he has no where promis'd to help those who will do nothing for themselves.

Besides, *Help* is but *Help*, It enables those that work to perform the Work that they set themselves to, but it does not do their Work for them; It assists them that endeavour to do their Work, but it would be more than Help and Assistance if it did all the Work by it self, without their Concurrence and Co-operation.

Being therefore here taught to pray to God, that we may not be led into Temptation, it is plainly our Duty not to run our selves into Temptation, but on the contrary, to use all the prudent Means we can to avoid the same.

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And

And this Duty we are taught by our Saviour himself, at the 29th and 30th Verses of the foregoing Chapter. *If thy Right Eye offend thee pluck it out, and cast it from thee, — and if thy Right Hand offend thee cut it off, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy Members should perish, and not that thy whole Body should be cast into Hell.*

'Tis in vain, 'tis indeed too late, to pray that we may not be led into Temptation, or that we may not fall by the Temptation, when we our selves have chosen it; for by wilfully running into Temptation, we consent to our own Fall; by chusing what we foresee will be the Occasion of our sinning, we give Consent to the Sin that is occasion'd thereby, and fully contract the Guilt of the Sinful Action, even before the Action it self is done. Nay, by chusing the Temptation we contract the Guilt of the Sin, although by some other Restraint or Impediment accidentally coming in our Way,

we should be hindred from doing the Act it self; so that whenever we give our Consent to that which will probably be the Cause or Occasion of our committing a Sin, we do then fall into Temptation, and we do then fall by the Temptation; and when we our selves are our own Tempters, 'tis no better than trifling with God, or mocking of him, to pray, that *be would not lead us into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil.*

2. From our Use of this Petition in the Lord's Prayer, we are further taught, that 'tis not only our Duty to avoid Temptations as much as we can, but likewise to fore-arm our selves as well as we can against those Temptations which we are liable to in this mortal State, and which by all our Care and Caution we cannot wholly avoid. For 'tis a vain Thing to pray to God for any Good, either Spiritual or Temporal, which we our selves will be at no Pains to procure to our selves. And therefore we are taught by our

our Saviour not only to pray, but likewise to watch against Temptation, Matth. xxvi. 41. *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into Temptation.* And Mark xiii. 33. *Take ye Heed, Watch and Pray, and Verse 37. What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch.* And to this same Purpose we are also exhorted by the Apostles; by St. James, Jam. iv. 7. *Resist the Devil; by St. Peter, 1 Pet. v. 9. Be sober, be vigilant, because your Adversary the Devil, as a roaring Lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour; whom resist, stedfast in the Faith.* And by St. Paul, Eph. vi. 11. *Put on the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the Wiles of the Devil.*

And indeed, if we set our selves with all our Strength to resist Temptations, we may then reasonably hope for such an Assistance of the Divine Grace as will enable us to overcome them; but if we our selves give Ground, while we are able to stand, there is great Reason to fear that God will withdraw his Grace from us,

when he sees we do not use it and improve it as we ought to do; according to that severe, and yet most just Threatning of our *Saviour*, before-cited, *Matth. xiii. 12.*

*Whosoever bath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more Abundance; but whosoever bath not, (i. e. makes not use of what he has) from him shall be taken away, even that which he bath.*

3. Lastly, From the Place which this Petition has, from the Order in which it lies in the Lord's Prayer; from its succeeding the foregoing Petition, wherein we had begg'd Forgiveness of our Sins, and from its being immediately subjoin'd thereunto, we may learn, That there is no Ground to hope for Forgiveness of our past Sins, without a firm Resolution and a sincere Endeavour to reform our Lives. For unless this were necessary to obtain a full Remission of our past Sins, we might have put an End to our Prayer with that Petition; because having our Sins forgiven, we should by that alone, be capable

capable of, and entitled to, all the Promises of the Gospel, and so should not need to be concern'd for any Thing further. According to that of the *Psalmist*, *Psalm xxxii. 1, 2.* *Blessed is he whose Unrighteousness is forgiven, and whose Sin is covered.* *Blessed is the Man unto whom the Lord imputeth not Iniquity.* Being therefore here taught, after we had begg'd Pardon of our former Sins, still to continue our Petition ; and to beg yet farther for Divine Grace and Help to enable us to resist and overcome Temptations for the Time to come, it hereby plainly appears, that we are not capable of this Blessedness that the *Psalmist* speaks of, without a Reformation of our Lives ; and consequently, that Remission of Sins, wherein that Blessedness does consist, will not be granted to us on any other Terms. And this is agreeable to the whole Tenor of the Bible ; *Repent and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out* ; so the Apostles preach'd, *Acts iii. 19.* *And repent of this thy Wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the*

*the Thought of thine Heart may be forgiven thee*, was the good Advice of St. Peter to *Simon the Magician*; *Act's viii.* 22. *first he was to repent*, and then he was to *pray for Pardon*; for a Prayer for Pardon before, or without Repentance, the *Apostle* knew would be ineffectual: And to them who observe the Method there prescrib'd by the *Apostle*; *i. e.* who both repent, and also pray for Pardon, a most sure Promise of Forgiveness is made; *Isaiah i. 16, 17, 18.* *Wash you, make you clean, put away the Evil of your Doings from before mine Eyes, cease to do Evil, learn to do well, seek Judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the Fatherless, plead for the Widow.* *Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord, tho' your Sins be as Scarlet, they shall be white as Snow, tho' they be red like Crimson, they shall be as Wool.* And to the same Sense is that of the *Wise Man*, *Prov. xxviii. 13.* *He that covereth his Sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have Mercy.*

And

And now I have done with the Second Part of the Lord's Prayer, which consists of Petition to God.

The Third and last Part of it is the Conclusion, contain'd in the latter Part of the 13th Verse: *For thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever, Amen.*

But I think it will be best to defer discoursing on that to some other Time.



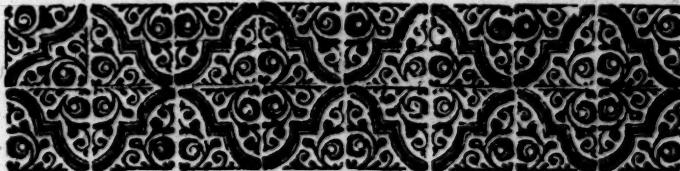
For

For thine is the

K I N G D O M, &c.

E X P L A I N ' D.





## DISCOURSE IX.

For thine is the Kingdom, &c.  
Explain'd.

M A T T H. VI. 13.

--- *For thine is the Kingdom, and  
the Power, and the Glory, for  
ever. Amen.*



**N** the Lord's Prayer there are, (as I have formerly noted) Three Principal Parts; 1. The Preface; 2. The Body of the Prayer, and 3. The Conclusion; and of

**U**

the

the Two first of these I have already spoken.

The Third Part of the Prayer, or the Conclusion, of which I am now to discourse, contains *First* a Doxology, or Solemn giving Glory to God, *Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, for ever*; And *Secondly*, An Expression of our full Approbation of, and hearty Consent to, the whole foregoing Prayer, in the Word, *Amen*.

I shall now speak somewhat of each of these, in the same Method which I have hitherto observ'd in Discoursing of all the foregoing Clauses of this Prayer; *i. e.* 1. I shall explain their Meaning, and shew what Sense we ought to have in our Minds when we utter these Words: And, 2. I shall shew what good Lessons we are taught, what Duties we are instructed in by the Use thereof.

And in this Method I shall first discourse of the Doxology, or giving Glory to God; *For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, for ever*.

Which

Which Words may be understood either, *First*, as a Recognition or Acknowledgment of the Greatness and Majesty of God; *Or, Secondly*, assigning some special Reasons inducing us to ask, and which we hope will likewise induce God to grant the several Requests which had been before put up to him.

i. I say, These Words may be understood as a simple Doxology; *i. e.* Only as a Recognition or Acknowledgment of the Greatness and Majesty of God; Thus;

*Thine is the Kingdom*; *i. e.* “ We  
“ heartily acknowledge thy Supreme Do-  
“ minion over us, and the whole World;  
“ we adore and worship thee, as the  
“ Great King, the Sovereign Lord of  
“ all.”

And, *thine is the Power*; *i. e.* “ We  
“ own likewise, and humbly adore that  
“ infinite Power whereby thou art able  
“ to govern the World, and to order all  
“ the Affairs of it according to thine own

“ Pleasure, notwithstanding any Oppo-  
“ sition that is made to thy Will, by  
“ Evil Men, or Devils, or any other  
“ Created Being.”

And *thine is the Glory*; *i. e.* “ We give  
“ thee the Glory of thy Greatness and  
“ Power, and of all the Things that  
“ thou dost, and of all the Good that  
“ thou workest in us, or bestowest upon  
“ us.”

And *Lastly*; We hereby acknowledge  
that God always was, and ever will be,  
the same that he is at present; that he  
changeth not, but ever was, and ever  
will be, as Great, as Powerful, and as  
Glorious as now; that he is infinitely and  
eternally such, *the same Yesterday, to  
Day, and for ever. Thine is the King-  
dom, the Power, and the Glory, for  
ever.*

And, thus understood, this Doxology at  
the Conclusion of the Lord’s Prayer, is  
the same in Sense with that larger Form  
of Praise and Thanksgiving that was  
us’d by *David*, and is recorded in

*1 Chron.*

*1 Chron. xxix. 10. &c. And David said;*  
*Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel, our*  
*Father, for ever and ever; Thine, O*  
*Lord, is the Greatness, and the Power,*  
*and the Glory, and the Victory, and the*  
*Majesty; For all that is in the Heaven*  
*and in the Earth, is thine; Thine is the*  
*Kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted*  
*as Head above all. Both Riches and Ho-*  
*nor come of thee, and thou reignest*  
*over all, and in thine Hand is Power and*  
*Might, and in thine Hand it is to make*  
*great, and to give Strength unto all; Now*  
*therefore, Our God, we thank thee, and*  
*praise thy glorious Name. Thine is the*  
*Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory for*  
*ever; i. e. " We humbly acknowledge,*  
*" and reverently adore the Greatness of*  
*" thy Kingdom, the Mightiness of thy*  
*" Power, and the Gloriousness of thy*  
*" Majesty, and the Eternity of these and*  
*" all other thy Infinite and Glorious Per-*  
*" fections." But,*

U 3 2. We

2. We may also, as I said, understand these Words, as assigning some special Reasons inducing us to ask, and which we hope will likewise induce God to grant the several Requests that we had before put up to him. And the Connexion that is made between these Words, and the foregoing Petitions by the Word, *For, For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory,* seems to favour this Interpretation. And thus understood, the Sense of them will be this.

*For thine is the Kingdom;* i. e. “ We therefore beg these Things of thee, because thou art our King; for thou art the Sovereign Lord of the whole World; and we are thy Subjects, who have our whole Dependence upon thee, and must receive all that we want from thy Riches and Fulness. Upon which Accounts it is befitting us to ask of thee, and it is suitable to thy Prerogative to grant our Requests.

*And thine also is the Power;* i. e. “ We therefore put up our Prayers to thee, “ because

“ because we know that Thou, being of  
“ infinite Power, art able to grant all  
“ that we desire; And we also hope that  
“ thou wilt do it, because the granting  
“ these our Requests will be an Express-  
“ ion and Manifestation of the Greatness  
“ of thy Power.”

And *thine also is the Glory*; *i. e.* “ By  
“ making known our Wants to thee, and  
“ humbly craving a Supply thereof from  
“ thy Bounty, we give thee the Glory  
“ that is due unto thy Name. And this  
“ also is a farther Ground of Hope to us,  
“ that thou wilt grant our Requests, be-  
“ cause to thee of Right will belong  
“ the Glory and Praise of all that we  
“ have, and of all that we do; seeing  
“ we have nothing but from thy  
“ Bounty, and can do nothing but by  
“ thy Help.”

And *thine is the Kingdom, and the  
Power, and the Glory for ever*; *i. e.* “ As  
“ it now is, so it ever was, and ever  
“ will be; *Thy Kingdom is an everlast-  
“ ing Kingdom*, and thy Dominion en-

U 4 “ dureth

“ dureth throughout all Ages; And *thy*  
“ *Power* is unalterable, not capable of  
“ Increase, because infinite; nor possible  
“ to be lessen’d, because superior to all  
“ other Power; And *thy Glory* also is  
“ Eternal; And because thou changest  
“ not, we have an entire Confidence,  
“ and a sure Trust in thee, that thou both  
“ canst and wilt, both now, and at all  
“ Times, hear the Prayers that we put up  
“ to thee”.

But these Two Senses of this Clause of the Lord’s Prayer, though they are somewhat different, yet are not at all disagreeing to each other; so that they may both be well enough meant by us when we utter these Words. And then the full Sense that we ought to have in our Minds, when we say this Conclusion of the Lord’s Prayer, will be, as if we should say. —

“ And now that we have put up our  
“ Petitions to thee for what we want,  
“ it is but fit that we should also render  
“ thee the Praise and Thanks that are  
“ *thy* Due. We acknowledge therefore  
that

“ that thou art a great King, whom we  
“ ought to Worship with the lowliest  
“ Reverence; and we own that thy  
“ Power is infinite, and are therefore  
“ sure that thou canst grant what we  
“ have desired; And we confess that  
“ thy Glory is above all, and we there-  
“ fore desire that thou mayst be glorified  
“ in all the good Things that thou be-  
“ stowest upon us; And lastly, we ac-  
“ knowledge that thy Kingdom and  
“ Power and Glory are for ever, that  
“ they are Eternal, and immutable; and  
“ therefore we do, and shall at all times,  
“ put our whole Trust in thee, because  
“ we acknowledge that thou canst never  
“ fail us.”

And this Conclusion of the Lord's Prayer is fruitful of good Instruction, as well as were all the foregoing Clauses of it;

And what Instructions they are that we receive from thence, was the next Thing I was to shew. And,

I. In

1. In general; from this Doxology's or Form's of Praise being added by our Lord himself to that Form of Prayer which he has taught us to use, and according to which as a Pattern, we are to compose all our own Prayers, we may learn, that it is our Duty always to accompany our Petitions to God for the Mercies we want, with Praises and Thanksgivings to him for the Mercies we have received, and with joyful Acknowledgments of his Majesty, Greatness and Bounty. According to those Directions given by the *Apostle*, *1 Thes. v. 17, 18. Pray without Ceasing, and in every Thing give Thanks; and Phil. iv. 6. In every Thing, by Prayer and Application with Thanksgiving, let your Requests be made known unto God.*

2. And more particularly.

From the *First* Clause of this Doxology; *For thine is the Kingdom*, we are put in Mind that it is our Duty in all Things to submit our selves to the Will of God, and

and to resign our selves to his Disposal, whom we here acknowledge to have the Sovereign Dominion over all.

From the Second Clause of it, *Thine is the Power*, we are farther taught, that it is our Duty in all our Straits and Difficulties, to seek for his Grace and Succour to direct and support us, and in all our Dangers and Wants, to rely upon his All-sufficiency to deliver and relieve us; according to that of the *Apostle*, in the Place just before cited. *Be careful for nothing, but in every Thing by Prayer and Supplication, --- Let your Requests be made known unto God.*

And from the Third Clause of it, *Thine is the Glory*: We are further taught to direct all our Actions to his Glory, to whom we here acknowledge that all Glory is due; according to that of the same *Apostle*, in *1 Cor. x. 31. Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the Glory of God.*

And lastly, From that Eternity which we here acknowledge in all the Divine

Attri-

Attributes and Perfections, when we say that his Kingdom, and Power, and Glory are *for ever*, we are taught to worship him continually, to praise him evermore, and to give Divine Honours to none besides him; because He is God from Everlasting to Everlasting, and besides Him there is no other God, and his Glory he will not give to another.

There is only one Word of the Lord's Prayer, that now remains to be spoken of, viz. *Amen.*

And this is an *Hebrew* Word, signifying, *Truly*, *verily*, or the like: And it is a Phrase often us'd by our *Saviour* at the Beginning of his Speech, to engage the Attention and Credit of his Hearers to what he was about to say, 'Αμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, which we translate, *Verily I say unto you*: And in the Gospel of St. *John* the Word is always doubled, 'Αμὴν, 'Αμὴν, *Verily, verily, I say unto you*; i. e. of a Truth I say unto you, or, in good Truth it is so as I say. And that this is the true Meaning of the Word, appears from several Places

Places in St. Luke's Gospel, parallel to some others in St. Matthew, or the other Evangelists, where he uses the *Greek Word* *ἀληθῶς*, the proper Signification of which is, *Indeed, Truly, or Of a Truth*, where the other Evangelists had used the *Hebrew Word*, *Amen*. Thus in *Luke* ix. 27. we read those Words of our *Saviour*; *I tell you*, *ἀληθῶς*, *of a truth*, *that there be some standing here*, *which shall not taste of Death*, *till they see the Kingdom of God*; but in *Matth.* xvi. 28. and *Mar.* ix. 1. where this same Passage is related, the *Hebrew Word*, *אָמַן*, is retain'd; *אָמַן לְךָ וְעַמָּךְ*, *Verily, I say unto you*. So again, in *Luke* xii. 44. 'tis said, *ἀληθῶς*, *Of a truth I say unto you*, *he will make him Ruler over all that he bath*; but in *Matth.* xxiv. 47. 'tis, *אָמַן*, *Verily, I say unto you*, *he will make him Ruler over all his Goods*. And the same may be observ'd again, in *Luke* xxi. 3. where our Lord, giving his Judgment of the poor Widow, that had cast her Two Mites into the Treasury, says, *ἀληθῶς*, *Of a Truth, I say unto you*, *that this*

*this poor Widow hath cast in more than they all : But in Mar. xii. 43. the Hebrew is retain'd, 'Αμην, Verily I say unto you, this poor Widow hath cast in more than they all.*

This therefore being the proper Meaning of the Word, *Amen*, it being an Adverb of Affirming, the Design of Adding it at the Conclusion of any Discourse, is to affirm all that had been said before ; we thereby declare and testify our Approbation thereof, and Consent thereto : And it denotes such a Sort of Approbation and Consent, as, considering the Nature of the foregoing Discourse, was proper to be given to it.

And therefore when we repeat the *Creed*, we say *Amen*, at the End of that; by saying which Word there, we grant the Truth of all the Articles before rehears'd, and declare our Belief thereof; There, *Amen*, signifies, *So it is, this is the true Faith*; or, *All this I stedfastly believe.*

And so, when at the End of every one of those Curses, which were order'd

to be pronounced upon Mount *Ebal*, *Deut.* xxvii. the People were taught to say, *Amen*, the Design was, that by saying that Word they should testify, that those Curses, upon such as did the Things there spoken of, were just and deserved, and such as all those wicked Doers might reasonably expect should befall them.

And of the like Use is the Word, *Amen*, in the *Commination* appointed in our Liturgy to be read upon the First Day of *Lent*; the Design of it (as the Church her self teaches in the Exhortation at the Beginning of that Office) is, that the Congregation *being admonish'd of the great Indignation of God against Sinners, may be warned to flee from those Vices for which, by their saying, Amen, at the End of every Sentence, they affirm with their own Mouths the Curse of God to be due.*

And so St. *Paul*, *Rom.* i. 25. after he had said of the Heathens, that *they worshipped and served the Creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever*, adds, *Amen*, meaning thereby further

ther to confirm that last Clause, *who is blessed for ever*; Amen, *i. e.* he is Blessed for ever; And he adds the same Word again upon a like Occasion, to almost the same Form of Speech, in the ixth Chapter of that Epistle, at the 5th *Verse*, only that as in the Words before cited, he had spoken of God the Father, or the First Person in the ever Blessed Trinity, he here affirms the same of the Second Person, our Lord *Jesus Christ*, of whom he here says, that *he is over all, God blessed for ever; whose are the Fathers*, (*i. e.* they were *Jews*) *and of whom as concerning the Flesh, Christ came, who, i. e.* which *Christ, is over all, God blessed for ever*; and then he immediately adds the Word, *Amen*, in further Affirmation of that last Clause, wherein he had asserted the Eternal Divinity of the Son; that it might not seem to have been written casually, or without good Thinking; *Christ is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen; i. e. So indeed it is, Christ is indeed God blessed for ever.* In both these Texts, the Word, *Amen*, has the Force of a Repetition in one Word, of

what had been said just before in more Words.

And of the like Use and Force is the Word *Amen*, when 'tis added at the End of the *Creed*, or of a *Prayer*.

When we say *Amen* at the End of the *Creed*, or whenever else we make Profession of our Belief of any divine Truth, we mean by adding that Word to repeat over again in short, all that Profession of our Faith or Belief, which we had before made in several Words, or in several Sentences. The saying *Amen* there, is equivalent to the saying over again all that had been said before; it is a fresh Declaration of our Consent thereto, and our Belief thereof.

But when the Word *Amen* is joined to a *Prayer*, or is added at the End of a *Prayer*, as it is here, it then serves to express our Wish or Desire, that the whole Matter of the Request to which it is subjoin'd, may be granted, or our good Hope that the same will be granted. Thus in *1 Kings i. 36.* when *David* had declared his Intention that *Solomon* should succeed

him in the Kingdom, *Benaiah* the Son of *Jeboiada* answer'd the King, and said, *A-men, the Lord God of my Lord the King say so too.* Where by this Word *Amen* he plainly meant to express *his Desire* that it might be so as the King had said. And thus also in *Jerem. xxviii. 6.* when the Prophet *Hananiah* had prophesy'd falsely, that the Vessels which *Nebuchadnezzar* had carried from *Jerusalem* to *Babylon*, should in a short Time be brought back again, the Prophet *Jeremiah* said, *Amen*; and yet he knew at the same Time that the Prophecy was false; he could not therefore be thought by saying that Word to give his Assent to the Truth of it; but nevertheless because the Matter of the Prophecy was good, and what the Prophet *Jeremiah* would have been as glad as any of them all might be fulfilled, he said, *A-men* to it; *i. e.* he declared his own Wish and Desire that it might be so as *Hananiah* had said, altho' he knew that it would not be so. And so he himself explains the Word; *Jeremiah* said, *Amen, The Lord do so, the Lord perform thy Words which thou*

hast prophesied. And so in *Revel. xxii. 20.* when our Lord had said, *Surely I come quickly,* the Apostle St. John, for himself, or in the Name of the whole Christian Church, immediately adds, *Amen, Even so, Come Lord Jesus;* *i.e.* May it be so as thou hast promised.

And of the like Use is this Word *Amen,* when it is added at the End of those Benedictions wherewith most of the *Epistles* in the *New Testament* are concluded.

If therefore the Prayer at the Conclusion of which, *Amen* is added, be spoken by one, and the *Amen* be spoken by another, as it is commonly in our Publick Prayers, when the Minister only speaks the whole Prayer, and all the People at the End of it say *Amen*; then they by saying *Amen*, signify their Consent to, and their Concurrence with, the whole Prayer that had been utter'd before by the Minister; and their Meaning is the same as when they say in the Litany, *We beseech to hear us good Lord:* But if the *Amen* be said by the same Person that

X 2 . . . . . speaks

speaks the Prayer ; as when we say *Amen* to our own Closet and Private Prayers, the *Amen* is then a Repetition in one Word of all that had been said before in all the Clauses of the foregoing Prayer : 'Tis a fresh Breathing forth of all those pious Desires or Affections of the Mind , that had been before more largely expressed.

When therefore we say *Amen* at the End of the *Lord's-Prayer* , whether the Prayer be spoken by our selves or another , the Sense we should have in our Minds is this.

If we refer it to the *Invocation*, *Our Father which art in Heaven*, we should mean, " So it is , 'tis our Father in Heaven, whom we put up our Prayers to, " and no other.

If we refer it to the *Petitions* , we should mean, " So be it, the Lord fulfil all our Petitions.

Or if we refer it to the *Doxology* immediately preceeding, *Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, for ever*, we should mean , as before in the Invocation, " So it is, thine indeed is the " King-

“ Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory for ever.

But when this Word, *Amen*, is added at the End of a Prayer, the Matter whereof we are sure is good and agreeable to God's Will, ( as most certainly the Matter of this Prayer is, which was taught us by our Lord himself ) then both the foregoing Senses of the Word may well be join'd together, *So it is*, and *so be it*; then by the Word, *Amen*, we should not only signify the Concurrence of our own Wishes, but likewise our assured Hope that the same will be granted to us.

And this is the Explication that is given of this Word in the *Church Catechism*, where, after the Scholar had briefly given the Meaning of the foregoing Clauses and Petitions of the Prayer; This and this, I desire of God in this Prayer; he is taught to say, *And this I trust be will do of his Mercy and Goodness, thro' our Lord Jesus Christ; and therefore I say Amen, so be it.*

And so much for the Meaning of the Word, *Amen*.      X 3      But

But from the Use of this Word, as well as of all the foregoing Clauses in this Prayer, we are also instructed in our Duty. Two Things especially there are, which we may learn from hence.

1. Being here taught by our Lord himself to say, *Amen* at the End of Prayer, to testify thereby our Consent thereunto, it plainly appears from hence, that the Prayers which are at any Time put up to God in Publick, ought to be express'd in such a Language, and in such a Stile, as may be easily understood by all those that are to join therein. For if they do not understand what is said, they can't approve of it, they can't give a rational Consent thereto, they can't say *Amen* to it.

It is highly expedient therefore, nay, it is absolutely necessary for the Edification of the Church, that the Publick Prayers, which are designed for the Use of all, should be suited to the Capacities of all; *i.e.* should be as plain, as easy, as familiar as is possible; that not only all high Flights,

Flights, and Rhetorical Figures and Flourishes should be therein carefully avoided, but likewise all Words that are not of very easy Meaning and of common Use.

In a word, the Publick Prayers should be such as the Prayers of our Church are, the Words common, the Stile easy, the Sentences short, and the whole Phrase and Composure suited to the Capacities of the Meanest.

And this is not only a Commendation of our Liturgy in particular, that it is so form'd and contriv'd, that the Meanest of the Congregation may understand our Prayers, and say *Amen* to them; but it is in general an Advantage of premeditated or set Forms of Prayer, above those which are conceived *Extempore*, that he that pens a Prayer for Publick Use, may take Time to study Plainness and Perspicuity, which he that prays *Extempore* cannot do. And indeed I am apt to think that one Reason why some Persons, who are not of the quickest Apprehensions, do more admire these *extempore Prayers* of others than they do the stated Prayers

of the Church, is because they do less understand them ; for People are generally most apt to admire that which they do least understand. But above all, it is manifestly most absurd and ridiculous, that the Publick Prayers, in which all are to join, should be put up , as they are in the Church of *Rome*, in an unknown Tongue, in a Language not understood, perhaps, by One in Twenty , it may be, not by One in an Hundred of the whole Congregation. The Folly and Ridiculoufness of which Practice is most evidently shewed in the xiyth *Chapter* of the 1<sup>st</sup> *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*, by several Arguments, and among others by this , that no Man can wisely and rationally say *Amen* , to a Prayer utter'd by another in an unknown Tongue, at the 15<sup>th</sup> and following Ver- ses. *What is it then, I will pray with the Spirit, and I will pray with the Understanding also : I will sing with the Spirit, and I will sing with the Understanding also. Else when thou shalt bless with the Spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the Unlearned say Amen, at thy giving*

*giving of Thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? For thou verily, (i. e. thou thy self, who understandest the Language which thou speakest in, thou) givest Thanks well; but the other (i. e. He who understads it not) is not edified.*  
But,

2. When we say *Amen* at the End of any Prayer, or other Address to God, it is supposed, not only that we understood what went before, but that we minded it, and gave good Attention to it; for when we say *Amen* to any Thing, we thereby give our Consent to it, and declare our Approbation of it: And how can we approve of, how can we consent to a Prayer that is spoken, if we do not attend to what is said?

This therefore is another Duty that we are plainly instructed in by this Word, *Amen*; viz. when we are at Prayer, to keep our Mind to our Business, to attend diligently to what we are about, to avoid as much as is possible all wandring Thoughts in Prayer, to be duly affected with

with every Clause and Sentence of that Prayer which we either speak our selves, or which is spoken by the Minister in the Congregation in our Names, and to have such Thoughts and Desires in our Minds throughout the whole Office, as the Words we are then speaking seem to import we have. For unless we do thus attend to, and are thus affected by what we say, our Service will be nothing else but Lip-Worship, and will be neither acceptable to God, nor profitable to our selves. For of all those that *draw near to God with their Mouths, and honour him with their Lips, while their Heart is removed far from him*, we are told by the Prophet, that *their Worship of God is vain.*

If. xxix.

13. comp.

Matth. xv.

8.

But if, as every Clause and Sentence of the Prayer is uttered, we go along with it in our Minds, and give such a Consent either of Approbation or Desire, as is proper to be given thereto, then the single Word, *Amen*, at the End of all, being utter'd with Fervency and true Devotion, will fully comprehend in it all the Sense of the whole foregoing Prayer, and we

shall

shall pray over again in one devout Breath, as much as we prayed before in the whole Office. And such *an effectual fervent Prayer*, (as St. James calls it) we may be sure will *avail much with God*. For *this* (as St. John says) *is the confidence* <sup>1 Joh. v.</sup> *that we have in him, that if we ask any* <sup>14, 15.</sup> *thing according to his Will he beareth us; And if we know that he bear us whatsoe'er we ask, we know that we have the Petitions that we desired of him.*

And now having gone through every Part of the Lord's Prayer by its self, explaining the Meaning thereof, and declaring the Duties that we are thereby instructed in and oblig'd to, I shall only observe Two Things to you concerning the Fulness, Perfection, and Excellency of this Prayer, and so conclude. And,

1. From what has been said it is easy to observe that the Lord's Prayer is a compleat Pattern of Prayer, there being in this short Prayer every Thing that can be reckon'd a Part of Prayer. For,

(1.) In

(1.) In Prayer we are to *acknowledge* and *adore* the *Divine Excellencies and Perfections*; and this we do here; *First*, In the Preface to the Prayer, when invoking God, we stile him our Heavenly Father, *Our Father which art in Heaven*, and then in the Conclusion of it, when we acknowledge that *his is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory for ever.*

(2.) In Prayer we are humbly to *thank* our Heavenly Father for all the Expressions of his Goodness to us; *Continue in Prayer*, says the *Apostle*, and *watch in the same with Thanksgiving*. And this Part of Prayer, *Thanksgiving*, is included likewise in the Preface, when we acknowledge that God is *our Father*, *i. e.* that he bears us a Fatherly Affection, and that we have experienced his Fatherly Kindness to us; and this same is likewise again exercis'd and express'd in the First Petition, *Hallowed be thy Name*; that Phrase being, (as I have formerly noted) like those commonly in Use among us, *God be*

be praised, Blessed be God, and the like; by which, though they are express'd in the Form of a Wish or Petition, yet what we mean is, actually to give Thanks and Praise to God; and so it may be understood there, *Hallowed be thy Name*; i. e. we do hallow thy Name, we praise and bless thee for thy Goodness.

(3.) In Prayer we are humbly to *request* of God the good Things that we want; this is the chief Subject of Prayer, this is what it has its Name from; for Prayer and *Petition*, are Words of the same Signification; and this is plainly the chief Subject of the Lord's Prayer; the whole Body of it, all but the Preface and Conclusion, being in its primary Meaning, *Petition* to God for such Things as we have need of (and indeed for all Things that we have need of) both for our Souls and Bodies. But then,

(4.) *Lastly*; It is not fit that vile and polluted Sinners, as we all are, should dare to approach the Presence of God, or presume

presume to offer up any Request to him, without an humble *Acknowledgment of our Vileness and Unworthiness*; It becomes not Sinners to ask any Thing of God without *confessing* their Faults, and sorrowfully owning that they are unworthy to receive the good Things that they ask'd: And this is *Confession*, which therefore ought to make a Part in all our Addresses to God; and so it does here: For when we ask God Forgiveness (as we are taught to do in the Fifth Petition, *Forgive us our Trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us*) such a Request contains, by plain Implication, an Acknowledgment that we are Sinners; for if we had no Sin, we should need no Pardon, and if we did not think our selves Sinners, we should not think it needful to beg Pardon.

From all which therefore it plainly appears, that this is a most compleat Form or Pattern of Prayer, that there is nothing essential to Prayer wanting in it.

2. What

2. What may be further observ'd and inferr'd from all the Discourses which I have made upon this Prayer, as to the admirable Excellency and Perfection of it; is, that it is so fram'd and contriv'd, as to serve both for an *Expression* of our *Devotion* towards God, and for an *Instruction* to our selves; that at the same Time, and by the same Words, by which we are taught what to request of God, we are also instructed in our own Duty, and strongly excited to it; upon which Account the frequent Use of it must needs be of singular Benefit and Advantage to us.

You may, I suppose, have heard it said, that no Person that is a Witch, can repeat the Words of the Lord's Prayer throughout; that if such a Person be put to repeat it, there will be always somewhat mistaken in the Repeating it, or somewhat omitted. I will not warrant the Truth of this Saying or Observation, because, as I have had no Experience of it, so neither can I see any Reason for it.

But

But this I think I may say with more Certainty of Truth, and with more Reason; That no wicked Man whatsoever, continuing in his Wickedness, can say this Prayer, nor indeed any one Sentence or Clause of it, with good Attention and fervent Devotion; and that every Good Man so saying it, must needs by natural Efficacy, as well as by the Divine Grace and Blessing be rendered better thereby.

1. I say, that a wicked Man, continuing in his Wickedness, can't say this Prayer, nor indeed any one Sentence or Clause of it, with good Attention, and fervent Devotion; he can't have such inward Affections of Mind towards God, as the Words of this Prayer do express, nor an hearty Desire of those Things which he seems to request of God; because such devout Affections and holy Desires are directly contradictory to, and utterly inconsistent with the Love and Practice of Sin.

For how can he presume so much as to call upon God in Prayer, who in Works denies him? Or how can he with Holy

Devotion call God his *Father*, who has sold himself to the Devil to work Wickedness, and continually exercises himself therein? *For whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself pure, and that wicked one toucheth him not*, as the *Apostle* says.

How can he say to God, with true Devotion, *Hallowed be thy Name*, who dishonours him in his whole Life? How can he be thought seriously and heartily to desire that the Holy Name of God may be sanctified by all, who is himself by wicked Oaths, and horrid Blasphemies, continually prophaning and polluting it? Again,

How can he pray heartily that *the Kingdom of God may come*, and be establish'd in the World, who will not give up himself to be rul'd and govern'd by him? Must not his Heart give his Tongue the Lye, while he says with his Mouth, *Thy Kingdom come*, and yet knows himself to be in his Heart with those wicked ones spoken of by *Job*, who *say unto God* <sup>Job xxi. 14.</sup>

*God depart from us, for we desire not the Knowledge of thy Ways : What is the Almighty that we should serve him, and what Profit should we have if we pray unto him ?*

Again ; we are taught in this Prayer to say, *Thy Will be done in Earth as it is in Heaven* ; But how can a Man say this with true and fervent Devotion, who continually opposes and resists the Divine Will, who will neither submit to the Providence of God, nor obey his Precepts ; who is *abominable and disobedient, and to every good Work reprobate* ?

Again ; *Give us* ( we are further taught to say ) *this Day our Daily Bread* ; Now in the *Matter* of this Petition, there is indeed nothing but what a very wicked Man may agree to ; for, He may desire as earnestly, nay, he does commonly desire more passionately, the Things of this Life than the Good Man does : But then as to the *Manner* of desiring them, as to the craving them of God, he can no more utter this Petition with true Devotion than he can any of the former ; because

because he knows that he does not depend upon God for them, nor expect them from his Blessing, but only from his own Wit and Industry; for if he look'd for them from the Divine Blessing, he would not seek them, as now he does, in such Ways as God has forbidden, *i. e.* by Fraud and Injustice, Extortion and Oppression.

And as little can he join, with true and hearty Devotion, in the Petition that follows; *Forgive us our Trespasses*; For though Pardon of Sins be what he greatly wants, and what, if he has any Sense of Religion in him, he can't but secretly wish God would grant; yet we can't with true Devotion, and with such Assurance of being heard as is requisite to render our Prayers availing, put up any Petition to God, the Matter of which we ourselves are sensible is highly unreasonable. And what can be more unreasonable than this? What can be more unfit for God to grant, or more prophane and presuming in us to ask, than this is? *viz.* That he would be please'd to grant Pardon to an

unrepenting Sinner. For to ask this of God, is just the same as it would be to desire him to abrogate all his Holy and Righteous Laws, or to grant us a License to transgress them.

And as little can such an one say, with a true Spirit of Devotion, and an hearty Concurrence of his own Desire, *Lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil*; for, as the *Apostle* says, *Every Man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own Lust, and enticed*: And this is what the wicked Man chuses to be; he gives himself up to his own Hearts Lusts, and delights to follow his own wicked Imaginations; so that to pray against Temptations is to pray against himself; and he can't be supposed to join heartily in this Petition, without supposing what is plainly impossible; viz. that a Man can at the same Time love and hate, chuse and refuse, delight in and abhor the same Things.

And lastly, When such an one says, *For thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever*; seeming thereby to acknow<sub>z</sub>

acknowledge the infinite and adorable Perfections of the Divine Nature, and to intend to give him the Praise and Glory that is his due, How can it be supposed that his Heart should go along with his Words, when at the same Time that he says these Words, it plainly appears by the whole Course and Tenor of his wicked Life, that he neither owns the Sovereign Dominion of God, nor dreads his Power, nor seeks his Glory ?

Thus it appears that a wicked Man, continuing such, can't say this Prayer, nor indeed any Clause or Sentence of it, with good Attention and fervent Devotion ; that he can't have such inward Affections of Mind towards God as the Words of this Prayer do express, nor an hearty Desire of those Things which he seems to request of God : Or if he had, he would quickly be a better Man than he is : And this was what I further said, *viz.*

2. That every good Man, every Time he uses this Prayer, with good Attention and fervent Devotion, musts needs by natural

tural Efficacy, as well as by the Divine Grace and Blessing, be rendred better thereby.

For every Time that he calls upon God as his *Father*, he is reminded of that filial Love and Duty which he owes to him.

Every Time that he prays heartily that *God's Name* may be *hallowed*, his own Mind must needs be filled with an awful Reverence towards him.

Every Time that he says with a true Spirit of Devotion, *Thy Kingdom come*, he is admonished to *seek first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness*.

Every Time he says, if he speaks the Words with Attention and Fervency, *Thy will be done in Earth as it is in Heaven*; he is taught his own Duty, *viz.* humbly to resign himself to God's Pleasure, and with all Readiness and Clearfulness to set himself to obey his Commands.

Whenever he desires of God his *daily Bread*, he excrcises an Act of Trust in God's Providence, and is warn'd not to use any such Means for the procuring the good Things of this Life, as he can't in

Reason expect, or so much as desire God's Blessing upon.

When he begs of God *Forgiveness* of his *Sins*, the Devotion wherewith the Words of this Petition should be accompanied, must be grounded upon the Testimony of his own Conscience that he is truly penitent, and that he does exercise such Mercy and Charity towards those that have offended him, as God has made the Condition of his own receiving Pardon.

When he desires of God *not to be led into Temptation*, if his Desires are hearty, it can't be supposed that he should wilfully run himself into those Dangers which he earnestly prays he may avoid or be deliver'd from.

And lastly, when he gives Glory to God, by a solemn Recognition and Acknowledgement of the Divine Excellencies and Perfections, saying, *Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, for ever*; if he be at all affected by what he says, it must needs be, that every Time he devoutly repeats this Doxology, his Love

Love to God must be increased, his Faith strengthned, and his Obedience confirm'd. Such then being the Excellency of this Prayer, and such the Benefits and Advantages of our religiouſly and devoutly uſing it ; what remains, but that we pray unto the ſame Blessed *Jesus*, who in Compassion to our Infirmitieſ has taught us how to pray, that he would be pleas'd to ſend also his holy Spirit to help our Infirmitieſ in Prayer ; that ſo we may always ſpeak these holy Words which he has taught us, with Attention and fervent Devotion, and thereby be made capable of his gracious Promise, who has ſaid, that *whatſoever we ſhall ask the Father in his Name he will do for us, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*

Joh. xiv.  
15.

And to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, Three Persons and One God, be given, as is moſt due, all Honour, Glory, and Praise, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

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